This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES
3 3433 08159709 2

495

James Lenox.

THE

HISTORY

OF THE

DECLINE AND FALL

OF THE

ROMAN EMPIRE.

By EDWARD GIBBON, Esq.

IN TWELVE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

A NEW EDITION.

LONDON.
Printed by A. Strahan, Printers Street,
FOR T. CADELL JUN. AND W. DAVIES, IN THE STRAND.

1802.

LENOX LIBRARY
NEW YORK

TABLE OF CONTENTS

OF THE

THIRD VOLUME.

CHAP. XVII.

Foundation of Conſtantinople.—Political Syſtem of Conſtantine, and his Succeſſes.—Military Diſcipline.—The Palace.—The Finances.

A. D.		Page
324	DESIGN of a new Capital - - -	2
	Situation of Byzantium - -	3
	Deſcription of CONSTANTINOPLE - -	4
	The Boſphorus - - - -	ib.
	The Port of Conſtantinople - - -	7
	The Propontis - - - -	8
	The Helleſpont - - -	9
	Advantages of Conſtantinople - -	12
	Foundation of the City - - -	13
	Its Extent - - - -	15
	Progreſs of the Work - - -	18
	Edifices - - - -	20
	Population - - - -	24
	Privileges - - - -	26
330 or 334.	Dedication - - -	28
300—500.	Form of Government in the Roman Empire	30
	Hierarchy of the State - - -	31
	Three Ranks of Honour - - -	34
	FOUR Diviſions of Office - - -	ib.
	I. The Conſuls - - - -	35
	The Patricians - - -	39

A. D.		Page
	II. The Prætorian Præfects	42
	The Præfects of Rome and Conſtantinople	45
	The Proconſuls, Vice-præfects, &c.	48
	The Governors of the Provinces	50
	The Profeſſion of the Law	53
	III. The Military Officers	56
	Diſtinction of the Troops	59
	Reduction of the Legions	62
	Difficulty of Levies	64
	Encreaſe of Barbarian Auxiliaries	66
	IV. Seven Miniſters of the Palace	68
	1. The Chamberlain	69
	2. The Maſter of the Offices	70
	3. The Quæſtor	71
	4. The Public Treaſurer	74
	5. The Private Treaſurer	75
	6, 7. The Counts of the Domeſtics	77
	Agents, or Official Spies	78
	Uſe of Torture	79
	Finances	81
	The General Tribute, or Indiction	83
	Aſſeſſed in the Form of a Capitation	87
	Capitation on Trade and Induſtry	94
	Free Gifts	95
	Concluſion	97

CHAP. XVIII.

Character of Conſtantine.—Gothic War.—Death of Conſtantine.—Diviſion of the Empire among his three Sons.—Perſian War.—Tragic Death of Conſtantine the Younger, and Conſtans.—Uſurpation of Magnentius.—Civil War.—Victory of Conſtantius.

A. D.		Page
	Character of Conſtantine	99
	His Virtues	100
	His Vices	102
	His Family	104
	Virtues of Criſpus	106
324	Jealouſy of Conſtantine	108

A. D.		Page
325	Edict of Conſtantine	109
326	Diſgrace and Death of Criſpus	ib.
	The Empreſs Fauſta	112
	The Sons and Nephews of Conſtantine	115
	Their Education	116
	Manners of the Sarmatians	119
	Their Settlement near the Danube	121
331	The Gothic War	123
334	Expulſion of the Sarmatians	126
337	Death and Funeral of Conſtantine	127
	Factions of the Court	129
	Maſſacre of the Princes	131
337	Diviſion of the Empire	133
310	Sapor, King of Perſia	134
	State of Meſopotamia and Armenia	136
342	Death of Tiridates	137
337—360.	The Perſian War	139
348	Battle of Singara	ib.
338. 346. 350.	Siege of Niſibis	142
340	Civil War, and Death of Conſtantine	145
350	Murder of Conſtans	147
	Magnentius and Vetranio aſſume the Purple	149
	Conſtantius refuſes to treat	151
	Depoſes Vetranio	153
351	Makes War againſt Magnentius	156
	Battle of Murſa	159
352	Conqueſt of Italy	162
353	Laſt Defeat and Death of Magnentius	164

CHAP. XIX.

Conſtantius ſole Emperor.—Elevation and Death of Gallus.—Danger and Elevation of Julian.—Sarmatian and Perſian Wars.—Victories of Julian in Gaul.

A. D.		Page
	Power of the Eunuchs	168
	Education of Gallus and Julian	171
351	Gallus declared Cæſar	172
	Cruelty and Imprudence of Gallus	173
354	Maſſacre of the Imperial Miniſters	175
	Dangerous Situation of Gallus	178

A. D.		Page
	His Diſgrace and Death	179
	The Danger and Eſcape of Julian	181
355	He is ſent to Athens	183
	Recalled to Milan	184
	Declared Cæſar	188
	Fatal End of Sylvanus	190
357	Conſtantius viſits Rome	191
	A new obeliſk	194
357, 358, 359.	The Quadian and Sarmatian War	195
358	The Perſian Negociation	200
359	Invaſion of Meſopotamia by Sapor	204
	Siege of Amida	206
360	Siege of Singara	209
	Conduct of the Romans	211
	Invaſion of Gaul by the Germans	213
	Conduct of Julian	215
356	His firſt Campaign in Gaul	217
357	His ſecond Campaign	219
	Battle of Straſburg	221
358	Julian ſubdues the Franks	225
357, 358, 359.	Makes three Expeditions beyond the Rhine	228
	Reſtores the Cities of Gaul	230
	Civil adminiſtration of Julian	232
	Deſcription of Paris	235

CHAP. XX.

The Motives, Progreſs, and Effects of the Converſion of Conſtantine.—Legal Eſtabliſhment of the Chriſtian, or Catholic, Church.

A. D.		Page
306—337.	Date of the Converſion of Conſtantine	238
	His Pagan Superſtition	242
306—312.	He protects the Chriſtians of Gaul	243
313	Edict of Milan	244
	Uſe and Beauty of the Chriſtian Morality	246
	Theory and Practice of paſſive Obedience	248
	Divine Right of Conſtantine	250
324	General Edict of Toleration	252
	Loyalty and Zeal of the Chriſtian Party	253

A. D.		Page
	Expectation and Belief of a Miracle	255
	I. The *Labarum*, or Standard of the Croſs	256
	II. The Dream of Conſtantine	259
	III. Appearance of a Croſs in the Sky	263
	The Converſion of Conſtantine might be ſincere	267
	The fourth Eclogue of Virgil	270
	Devotion and Privileges of Conſtantine	271
	Delay of his Baptiſm till the Approach of Death	272
	Propagation of Chriſtianity	276
312—438.	Change of the national Religion	280
	Diſtinction of the ſpiritual and temporal Powers	281
	State of the Biſhops under the Chriſtian Emperors	283
	I. Election of Biſhops	284
	II. Ordination of the Clergy	287
	III. Property	290
	IV. Civil Juriſdiction	295
	V. Spiritual Cenſures	297
	VI. Freedom of public Preaching	300
	VII. Privilege of legiſlative Aſſemblies	303

CHAP. XXI.

Perſecution of Hereſy.—The Schiſm of the Donatiſts.—The Arian Controverſy.—Athanaſius.—Diſtracted State of the Church and Empire under Conſtantine and his Sons.—Toleration of Paganiſm.

A. D.		Page
312	African Controverſy	309
315	Schiſm of the Donatiſts	311
	The Trinitarian Controverſy	314
A. C.		
360	The Syſtem of Plato	ib.
	The Logos	315
300	Taught in the School of Alexandria	ib.
A. D.		
97	Revealed by the Apoſtle St. John	317
	The Ebionites and Docetes	319
	Myſterious Nature of the Trinity	320
	Zeal of the Chriſtians	322
	Authority of the Church	326

A. D.		Page
	Factions	327
318	Heterodox Opinions of Arius	328
	Three Syſtems of the Trinity	329
	I. Arianiſm	ib.
	II. Tritheiſm	330
	III. Sabellianiſm	331
325	Council of Nice	332
	The Homoouſion	333
	Arian Creeds	336
	Arian Sects	338
	Faith of the Weſtern, or Latin, Church	342
360	Council of Rimini	343
	Conduct of the Emperors in the Arian Controverſy	344
324	Indifference of Conſtantine	345
325	His Zeal	346
328—337.	He perſecutes the Arian and the Orthodox Party	347
337—361.	Conſtantius favours the Arians	350
	Arian Councils	352
	Character and Adventures of Athanaſius	356
330	Perſecution againſt Athanaſius	359
336	His firſt Exile	363
341	His ſecond Exile	ib.
349	His Reſtoration	367
351	Reſentment of Conſtantius	370
353—355.	Councils of Arles and Milan	371
355	Condemnation of Athanaſius	374
	Exiles	375
356	Third Expulſion of Athanaſius from Alexandria	378
	His Behaviour	381
356—362.	His Retreat	383
	Arian Biſhops	387
	Diviſions	388
	I. Rome	390
	II. Conſtantinople	392
	Cruelty of the Arians	396
345, &c.	The Revolt and Fury of the Donatiſt Circumcellions	398
	Their religious Suicides	401
312—361.	General Character of the Chriſtian Sects	403
	Toleration of Paganiſm by Conſtantine	404
	By his Sons	407

THE

THE

HISTORY

OF THE

DECLINE AND FALL

OF THE

ROMAN EMPIRE.

CHAP. XVII.

Foundation of Conſtantinople.—Political Syſtem of Conſtantine, and his Succeſſors.—Military Diſcipline.—The Palace.—The Finances.

THE unfortunate Licinius was the laſt rival who oppoſed the greatneſs, and the laſt captive who adorned the triumph, of Conſtantine. After a tranquil and proſperous reign, the Conqueror bequeathed to his family the inheritance of the Roman empire; a new capital, a new policy, and a new religion; and the innovations which he eſtabliſhed have been embraced and conſecrated by ſucceeding generations. The age of the great Conſtantine and his ſons is filled with important events; but the hiſtorian muſt be oppreſſed by their number and va-

CHAP. XVII.

CHAP. XVII.

riety, unleſs he diligently ſeparates from each other the ſcenes which are connected only by the order of time. He will deſcribe the political inſtitutions that gave ſtrength and ſtability to the empire, before he proceeds to relate the wars and revolutions which haſtened its decline. He will adopt the diviſion unknown to the ancients, of civil and eccleſiaſtical affairs: the victory of the Chriſtians, and their inteſtine diſcord, will ſupply copious and diſtinct materials both for edification and for ſcandal.

Deſign of a new capital. A. D. 324.

After the defeat and abdication of Licinius, his victorious rival proceeded to lay the foundations of a city, deſtined to reign, in future times, the miſtreſs of the Eaſt, and to ſurvive the empire and religion of Conſtantine. The motives, whether of pride or of policy, which firſt induced Diocletian to withdraw himſelf from the ancient ſeat of government, had acquired additional weight by the example of his ſucceſſors, and the habits of forty years. Rome was inſenſibly confounded with the dependent kingdoms which had once acknowledged her ſupremacy; and the country of the Cæſars was viewed with cold indifference by a martial prince, born in the neighbourhood of the Danube, educated in the courts and armies of Aſia, and inveſted with the purple by the legions of Britain. The Italians, who had received Conſtantine as their deliverer, ſubmiſſively obeyed the edicts which he ſometimes condeſcended to addreſs to the ſenate and people of Rome; but they were ſeldom honoured with the preſence of their new ſovereign. During the vigour

gour of his age, Conſtantine, according to the various exigencies of peace and war, moved with ſlow dignity, or with active diligence, along the frontiers of his extenſive dominions; and was always prepared to take the field either againſt a foreign or a domeſtic enemy. But as he gradually reached the ſummit of proſperity and the decline of life, he began to meditate the deſign of fixing in a more permanent ſtation the ſtrength as well as majeſty of the throne. In the choice of an advantageous ſituation, he preferred the confines of Europe and Aſia; to curb, with a powerful arm, the barbarians who dwelt between the Danube and the Tanais; to watch with an eye of jealouſy the conduct of the Perſian monarch, who indignantly ſupported the yoke of an ignominious treaty. With theſe views, Diocletian had ſelected and embelliſhed the reſidence of Nicomedia: but the memory of Diocletian was juſtly abhorred by the protector of the church; and Conſtantine was not inſenſible to the ambition of founding a city which might perpetuate the glory of his own name. During the late operations of the war againſt Licinius, he had ſufficient opportunity to contemplate, both as a ſoldier and as a ſtateſman, the incomparable poſition of Byzantium; and to obſerve how ſtrongly it was guarded by nature againſt an hoſtile attack, whilſt it was acceſſible on every ſide to the benefits of commercial intercourſe. Many ages before Conſtantine, one of the moſt judicious hiſtorians of anti-

Situation of Byzantium.

CHAP. XVII.

quity [1] had described the advantages of a situation, from whence a feeble colony of Greeks derived the command of the sea, and the honours of a flourishing and independent republic [2].

Description of CONSTANTINOPLE.

If we survey Byzantium in the extent which it acquired with the august name of Constantinople, the figure of the imperial city may be represented under that of an unequal triangle. The obtuse point, which advances towards the east and the shores of Asia, meets and repels the waves of the Thracian Bosphorus. The northern side of the city is bounded by the harbour; and the southern is washed by the Propontis, or sea of Marmara. The basis of the triangle is opposed to the west, and terminates the continent of Europe. But the admirable form and division of the circumjacent land and water cannot, without a more ample explanation, be clearly or sufficiently understood.

The Bosphorus.

The winding channel through which the waters of the Euxine flow with a rapid and incessant course towards the Mediterranean, received the appellation of Bosphorus, a name not less cele-

[1] Polybius, l. iv. p. 423. edit. Casaubon. He observes that the peace of the Byzantines was frequently disturbed, and the extent of their territory contracted, by the inroads of the wild Thracians.

[2] The navigator Byzas, who was styled the son of Neptune, founded the city 656 years before the Christian Æra. His followers were drawn from Argos and Megara. Byzantium was afterwards rebuilt and fortified by the Spartan general Pausanias. See Scaliger Animadvers. ad Euseb. p. 81. Ducange Constantinopolis, l. i. part i. cap 15, 16. With regard to the wars of the Byzantines against Philip, the Gauls, and the kings of Bithynia, we should trust none but the ancient writers who lived before the greatness of the imperial city had excited a spirit of flattery and fiction.

brated

CHAP. XVII.

brated in the hiſtory, than in the fables, of antiquity [3]. A crowd of temples and of votive altars profuſely ſcattered along its ſteep and woody banks, atteſted the unſkilfulneſs, the terrors, and the devotion of the Grecian navigators, who, after the example of the Argonauts, explored the dangers of the inhoſpitable Euxine. On theſe banks tradition long preſerved the memory of the palace of Phineus, infeſted by the obſcene harpies [4]; and of the ſylvan reign of Amycus, who defied the ſon of Leda to the combat of the Ceſtus [5]. The ſtreights of the Boſphorus are terminated by the Cyanean rocks, which, according to the deſcription of the poets, had once floated on the face of the waters; and were deſtined by the gods to protect the entrance of the Euxine againſt the eye of profane curioſity [6]. From the Cyanean rocks to the point and harbour of Byzantium, the

[3] The Boſphorus has been very minutely deſcribed by Dionyſius of Byzantium, who lived in the time of Domitian (Hudſon Geograph. Minor. tom. iii.), and by Gilles or Gyllius, a French traveller of the XVIth century. Tournefort (Lettre XV.) ſeems to have uſed his own eyes and the learning of Gyllius.

[4] There are very few conjectures ſo happy as that of Le Clerc (Bibliotheque Univerſelle, tom. i. p. 148.), who ſuppoſes that the harpies were only locuſts. The Syriac or Phœnician name of thoſe inſects, their noiſy flight, the ſtench and devaſtation which they occaſion, and the north wind which drives them into the ſea, all contribute to form the ſtriking reſemblance.

[5] The reſidence of Amycus was in Aſia, between the old and the new caſtles, at a place called Laurus Inſana. That of Phineus was in Europe, near the village of Mauromole and the Black Sea. See Gyllius de Boſph. l. ii. c. 23. Tournefort, Lettre XV.

[6] The deception was occaſioned by ſeveral pointed rocks, alternately covered and abandoned by the waves. At preſent there are two ſmall iſlands, one towards either ſhore: that of Europe is diſtinguiſhed by the column of Pompey.

CHAP. XVII.

winding length of the Boſphorus extends about ſixteen miles[7], and its moſt ordinary breadth may be computed at about one mile and a half. The *new* caſtles of Europe and Aſia are conſtructed, on either continent, upon the foundations of two celebrated temples, of Serapis and of Jupiter Urius. The *old* caſtles, a work of the Greek emperors, command the narroweſt part of the channel, in a place where the oppoſite banks advance within five hundred paces of each other. Theſe fortreſſes were reſtored and ſtrengthened by Mahomet the Second, when he meditated the ſiege of Conſtantinople[8]: but the Turkiſh conqueror was moſt probably ignorant, that near two thouſand years before his reign, Darius had choſen the ſame ſituation to connect the two continents by a bridge of boats[9]. At a ſmall diſtance from the old caſtles we diſcover the little town of Chryſopolis, or Scutari, which may almoſt be conſidered as the Aſiatic ſuburb of Conſtantinople. The Boſphorus, as it begins to open into the Propontis, paſſes between Byzantium and Chalcedon. The latter of thoſe cities was built by the Greeks,

[7] The ancients computed one hundred and twenty ſtadia, or fifteen Roman miles. They meaſured only from the new caſtles, but they carried the ſtreights as far as the town of Chalcedon.

[8] Ducas Hiſt. c. 34. Leunclavius Hiſt. Turcia Muſulmanica, l. xv. p. 577. Under the Greek empire theſe caſtles were uſed as ſtate priſons, under the tremendous name of Lethe, or towers of oblivion.

[9] Darius engraved in Greek and Aſſyrian letters on two marble columns, the names of his ſubject-nations, and the amazing numbers of his land and ſea forces. The Byzantines afterwards tranſported theſe columns into the city, and uſed them for the altars of their tutelar deities. Herodotus, l. iv. c. 87.

a few

CHAP. XVII.

a few years before the former; and the blindneſs of its founders, who overlooked the ſuperior advantages of the oppoſite coaſt, has been ſtigmatiſed by a proverbial expreſſion of contempt [10].

The port.

The harbour of Conſtantinople, which may be conſidered as an arm of the Boſphorus, obtained, in a very remote period, the denomination of the *Golden Horn*. The curve which it deſcribes might be compared to the horn of a ſtag, or, as it ſhould ſeem, with more propriety, to that of an ox [11]. The epithet of *golden* was expreſſive of the riches which every wind wafted from the moſt diſtant countries into the ſecure and capacious port of Conſtantinople. The river Lycus, formed by the conflux of two little ſtreams, pours into the harbour a perpetual ſupply of freſh water, which ſerves to cleanſe the bottom, and to invite the periodical ſhoals of fiſh to ſeek their retreat in that convenient receſs. As the viciſſitudes of tides are ſcarcely felt in thoſe ſeas, the conſtant depth of the harbour allows goods to be landed on the quays without the aſſiſtance of boats; and it has been obſerved, that in many places the largeſt veſſels may reſt their prows againſt the houſes,

[10] Namque artiſſimo inter Europam Aſiamque divortio Byzantium in extremâ Europâ poſuere Græci, quibus, Pythium Apollinem conſulentibus ubi conderent urbem, redditum oraculum eſt, quærerent ſedem *cæcorum* terris adverſam. Eâ ambage Chalcedonii monſtrabantur, quòd priores illuc advecti, prævisâ locorum utilitate pejora legiſſent. Tacit. Annal. xii. 62.

[11] Strabo, l. x. p. 492. Moſt of the antlers are now broke off; or, to ſpeak leſs figuratively, moſt of the receſſes of the harbour are filled up. See Gylli de Boſphoro Thracio, l. i. c. 5.

CHAP. XVII.

while their sterns are floating in the water [12]. From the mouth of the Lycus to that of the harbour, this arm of the Bosphorus is more than seven miles in length. The entrance is about five hundred yards broad, and a strong chain could be occasionally drawn across it, to guard the port and city from the attack of an hostile navy [13].

The Propontis.

Between the Bosphorus and the Hellespont, the shores of Europe and Asia receding on either side inclose the sea of Marmara, which was known to the ancients by the denomination of Propontis. The navigation from the issue of the Bosphorus to the entrance of the Hellespont is about one hundred and twenty miles. Those who steer their westward course through the middle of the Propontis, may at once descry the high lands of Thrace and Bithynia, and never lose sight of the lofty summit of Mount Olympus, covered with eternal snows [14]. They leave on the left a deep gulf, at the bottom of which Nicomedia was seated, the imperial residence of Diocletian; and

[12] Procopius de Ædificiis, l. i. c. 5. His description is confirmed by modern travellers See Thevenot, part i. l. i. c. 15. Tournefort, Lettre XII. Niebuhr Voyage d'Arabie, p. 22.

[13] See Ducange, C. P. l. i. part i. c. 16. and his Observations sur Villehardouin, p. 289. The chain was drawn from the Acropolis, near the modern Kiosk, to the tower of Galata; and was supported at convenient distances by large wooden piles.

[14] Thevenot (Voyages au Levant, part i. l. i. c. 14.) contracts the measure to 125 small Greek miles. Belon (Observations, l. ii. c. 1.) gives a good description of the Propontis, but contents himself with the vague expression of one day and one night's sail. When Sandys (Travels, p. 21.) talks of 150 furlongs in length as well as breadth, we can only suppose some mistake of the press in the text of that judicious traveller.

they paſs the ſmall iſlands of Cyzicus and Proconneſus before they caſt anchor at Gallipoli; where the ſea, which ſeparates Aſia from Europe, is again contracted into a narrow channel.

The Helleſpont.

The geographers who, with the moſt ſkilful accuracy, have ſurveyed the form and extent of the Helleſpont, aſſign about ſixty miles for the winding courſe, and about three miles for the ordinary breadth of thoſe celebrated ſtreights[15]. But the narroweſt part of the channel is found to the northward of the old Turkiſh caſtles between the cities of Ceſtus and Abydus. It was here that the adventurous Leander braved the paſſage of the flood for the poſſeſſion of his miſtreſs[16]. It was here likewiſe, in a place where the diſtance between the oppoſite banks cannot exceed five hundred paces, that Xerxes impoſed a ſtupendous bridge of boats, for the purpoſe of tranſporting into Europe an hundred and ſeventy myriads of barbarians[17]. A ſea contracted within ſuch narrow

[15] See an admirable diſſertation of M. d'Anville upon the Helleſpont or Dardanelles, in the Memoires de l'Academie des Inſcriptions, tom. xxviii. p. 318—346. Yet even that ingenious geographer is too fond of ſuppoſing new, and perhaps imaginary *meaſures*, for the purpoſe of rendering ancient writers as accurate as himſelf. The ſtadia employed by Herodotus in the deſcription of the Euxine, the Boſphorus, &c. (l. iv. c. 85.) muſt undoubtedly be all of the ſame ſpecies: but it ſeems impoſſible to reconcile them either with truth or with each other.

[16] The oblique diſtance between Seſtus and Abydus was thirty ſtadia. The improbable tale of Hero and Leander is expoſed by M. Mahudel, but is defended on the authority of poets and medals by M. de la Nauze. See the Academie des Inſcriptions, tom. vii. Hiſt. p. 74. Mem. p. 240.

[17] See the ſeventh book of Herodotus, who has erected an elegant trophy to his own fame and to that of his country. The review appears

CHAP. XVII.

row limits, may ſeem but ill to deſerve the ſingular epithet of *broad*, which Homer, as well as Orpheus, has frequently beſtowed on the Helleſpont. But our ideas of greatneſs are of a relative nature: the traveller, and eſpecially the poet, who ſailed along the Helleſpont, who purſued the windings of the ſtream, and contemplated the rural ſcenery, which appeared on every ſide to terminate the proſpect, inſenſibly loſt the remembrance of the ſea; and his fancy painted thoſe celebrated ſtreights, with all the attributes of a mighty river flowing with a ſwift current, in the midſt of a woody and inland country, and at length, through a wide mouth, diſcharging itſelf into the Ægean or Archipelago[18]. Ancient Troy[19], ſeated on an eminence at the foot of Mount Ida, overlooked the mouth of the Helleſpont, which ſcarcely received an acceſſion of waters from the tribute of thoſe immortal rivulets the Simois and Scamander. The Grecian

pears to have been made with tolerable accuracy; but the vanity, firſt of the Perſians, and afterwards of the Greeks, was intereſted to magnify the armament and the victory. I ſhould much doubt whether the *invaders* have ever outnumbered the *men* of any country which they attacked.

[18] See Wood's Obſervations on Homer, p. 320. I have, with pleaſure, ſelected this remark from an author who in general ſeems to have diſappointed the expectation of the public as a critic, and ſtill more as a traveller. He had viſited the banks of the Helleſpont; he had read Strabo; he ought to have conſulted the Roman itineraries; how was it poſſible for him to confound Ilium and Alexandria Troas (Obſervations, p. 340, 341.), two cities which were ſixteen miles diſtant from each other?

[19] Demetrius of Scepſis wrote ſixty books on thirty lines of Homer's Catalogue. The XIIIth Book of Strabo is ſufficient for *our* curioſity.

camp

camp had ſtretched twelve miles along the ſhore from the Sigæan to the Rhætean promontory; and the flanks of the army were guarded by the braveſt chiefs who fought under the banners of Agamemnon. The firſt of thoſe promontories was occupied by Achilles with his invincible Myrmidons, and the dauntleſs Ajax pitched his tents on the other. After Ajax had fallen a ſacrifice to his diſappointed pride, and to the ingratitude of the Greeks, his ſepulchre was erected on the ground where he had defended the navy againſt the rage of Jove and of Hector; and the citizens of the riſing town of Rhæteum celebrated his memory with divine honours[20]. Before Conſtantine gave a juſt preference to the ſituation of Byzantium, he had conceived the deſign of erecting the ſeat of empire on this celebrated ſpot, from whence the Romans derived their fabulous origin. The extenſive plain which lies below ancient Troy, towards the Rhætean promontory and the tomb of Ajax, was firſt choſen for his new capital; and though the undertaking was ſoon relinquiſhed, the ſtately remains of unfiniſhed walls and towers attracted the notice of all who ſailed through the ſtreights of the Helleſpont[21].

CHAP. XVII.

We

[20] Strabo, l. xiii. p. 595. The diſpoſition of the ſhips which were drawn upon dry land, and the poſts of Ajax and Achilles, are very clearly deſcribed by Homer. See Iliad ix. 220.

[21] Zoſim. l. ii. p. 105. Sozomen, l. ii. c. 3. Theophanes, p. 18. Nicephorus Calliſtus, l. vii. p. 48. Zonaras, tom. ii. l. xiii. p. 6. Zoſimus places the new city between Ilium and Alexandria, but this apparent difference may be reconciled by the large extent of its circumference. Before the foundation of Conſtantinople, Theſſalonica

CHAP. XVII.

Advantages of Conſtantinople.

We are at preſent qualified to view the advantageous poſition of Conſtantinople; which appears to have been formed by Nature for the centre and capital of a great monarchy. Situated in the forty-firſt degree of latitude, the Imperial city commanded, from her ſeven hills [22], the oppoſite ſhores of Europe and Aſia; the climate was healthy and temperate, the ſoil fertile, the harbour ſecure and capacious; and the approach on the ſide of the continent was of ſmall extent and eaſy defence. The Boſphorus and the Helleſpont may be conſidered as the two gates of Conſtantinople; and the prince who poſſeſſed thoſe important paſſages could always ſhut them againſt a naval enemy, and open them to the fleets of commerce. The preſervation of the eaſtern provinces may, in ſome degree, be aſcribed to the policy of Conſtantine, as the Barbarians of the Euxine, who in the preceding age had poured their armaments into the heart of the Mediterranean, ſoon deſiſted from the exerciſe of piracy, and deſpaired of forcing this inſurmountable barrier. When the gates of the Helleſpont and Boſphorus were ſhut, the capital ſtill enjoyed, within their ſpacious incloſure, every production which could ſupply the wants, or gratify the luxury, of its numerous

Theſſalonica is mentioned by Cedrenus (p. 483.), and Sardica by Zonaras, as the intended capital. They both ſuppoſe, with very little probability, that the Emperor, if he had not been prevented by a prodigy, would have repeated the miſtake of the *blind* Chalcedonians.

[22] Pocock's Deſcription of the Eaſt, vol. ii. part ii. p. 127. His plan of the ſeven hills is clear and accurate. That traveller is ſeldom ſo ſatisfactory.

merous inhabitants. The ſea-coaſts of Thrace and Bithynia, which languiſh under the weight of Turkiſh oppreſſion, ſtill exhibit a rich proſpect of vineyards, of gardens, and of plentiful harveſts; and the Propontis has ever been renowned for an inexhauſtible ſtore of the moſt exquiſite fiſh, that are taken in their ſtated ſeaſons, without ſkill, and almoſt without labour [23]. But when the paſſages of the Streights were thrown open for trade, they alternately admitted the natural and artificial riches of the north and ſouth, of the Euxine, and of the Mediterranean. Whatever rude commodities were collected in the foreſts of Germany and Scythia, as far as the ſources of the Tanais and the Boryſthenes; whatſoever was manufactured by the ſkill of Europe or Aſia; the corn of Egypt, and the gems and ſpices of the fartheſt India, were brought by the varying winds into the port of Conſtantinople, which, for many ages, attracted the commerce of the ancient world [24].

Foundation of the city.

The proſpect of beauty, of ſafety, and of wealth, united in a ſingle ſpot, was ſufficient to juſtify the choice of Conſtantine. But as ſome decent mixture of prodigy and fable has, in every

[23] See Belon. Obſervations, c. 72—76. Among a variety of different ſpecies, the Pelamides, a ſort of Thunnies, were the moſt celebrated. We may learn from Polybius, Strabo, and Tacitus, that the profits of the fiſhery conſtituted the principal revenue of Byzantium.

[24] See the eloquent deſcription of Buſbequius, epiſtol. i. p. 64. Eſt in Europa; habet in conſpectu Aſiam, Ægyptum, Africamque à dextrâ: quæ tametſi contiguæ non ſunt, maris tamen navigandique commoditate veluti junguntur. A ſiniſtra vero Pontus eſt Euxinus, &c.

age,

CHAP. XVII.

age, been ſuppoſed to reflect a becoming majeſty on the origin of great cities[25], the emperor was deſirous of aſcribing his reſolution, not ſo much to the uncertain counſels of human policy, as to the infallible and eternal decrees of divine wiſdom. In one of his laws he has been careful to inſtruct poſterity, that, in obedience to the commands of God, he laid the everlaſting foundations of Conſtantinople[26]: and though he has not condeſcended to relate in what manner the cœleſtial inſpiration was communicated to his mind, the defect of his modeſt ſilence has been liberally ſupplied by the ingenuity of ſucceeding writers; who deſcribe the nocturnal viſion which appeared to the fancy of Conſtantine, as he ſlept within the walls of Byzantium. The tutelar genius of the city, a venerable matron ſinking under the weight of years and infirmities, was ſuddenly transformed into a blooming maid, whom his own hands adorned with all the ſymbols of Imperial greatneſs[27]. The monarch awoke, interpreted the auſpicious omen, and obeyed, without heſitation, the will of heaven. The day which gave birth to a city or colony was celebrated by the Romans with ſuch ceremonies as had been ordained by a

[25] Datur hæc venia antiquitati, ut miſcendo humana divinis, primordia urbium auguſtiora faciat. T. Liv. in proem.

[26] He ſays in one of his laws, pro commoditate Urbis quam æterno nomine, jubente Deo, donavimus. Cod. Theodoſ. l. xiii. tit. v. leg. 7.

[27] The Greeks, Theophanes, Cedrenus, and the Author of the Alexandrian Chronicle, confine themſelves to vague and general expreſſions. For a more particular account of the viſion, we are obliged to have recourſe to ſuch Latin writers as William of Malmſbury. See Ducange C. P. l i. p. 24, 25.

generous

generous ſuperſtition[28]; and though Conſtantine might omit ſome rites which favoured too ſtrongly of their Pagan origin, yet he was anxious to leave a deep impreſſion of hope and reſpect on the minds of the ſpectators. On foot, with a lance in his hand, the emperor himſelf led the ſolemn proceſſion; and directed the line, which was traced as the boundary of the deſtined capital: till the growing circumference was obſerved with aſtoniſhment by the aſſiſtants, who, at length, ventured to obſerve, that he had already exceeded the moſt ample meaſure of a great city. "I ſhall "ſtill advance," replied Conſtantine, "till HE, "the inviſible guide who marches before me, "thinks proper to ſtop[29]." Without preſuming to inveſtigate the nature or motives of this extraordinary conductor, we ſhall content ourſelves with the more humble taſk of deſcribing the extent and limits of Conſtantinople[30]. CHAP. XVII.

In the actual ſtate of the city, the palace and gardens of the Seraglio occupy the eaſtern promontory, the firſt of the ſeven hills, and cover Extent.

[28] See Plutarch in Romul. tom. i. p. 49. edit. Bryan. Among other ceremonies, a large hole, which had been dug for that purpoſe, was filled up with handfuls of earth, which each of the ſettlers brought from the place of his birth, and thus adopted his new country.

[29] Philoſtorg'us, l. ii. c. 9. This incident, though borrowed from a ſuſpected writer, is characteriſtic and probable.

[30] See in the Memoires de l'Academie, tom. xxxv. p. 747—758, a diſſertation of M. d'Anville on the extent of Conſtantinople. He takes the plan inſerted in the Imperium Orientale of Banduri as the moſt complete; but, by a ſeries of very nice obſervations, he reduces the extravagant proportion of the ſcale, and inſtead of 9500, determines the circumference of the city as conſiſting of about 7800 French *toiſes*.

CHAP. XVII.

about one hundred and fifty acres of our own meaſure. The ſeat of Turkiſh jealouſy and deſpotiſm is erected on the foundations of a Grecian republic; but it may be ſuppoſed that the Byzantins were tempted by the conveniency of the harbour to extend their habitations on that ſide beyond the modern limits of the Seraglio. The new walls of Conſtantine ſtretched from the port to the Propontis acroſs the enlarged breadth of the triangle, at the diſtance of fifteen ſtadia from the ancient fortification; and with the city of Byzantium they incloſed five of the ſeven hills, which, to the eyes of thoſe who approach Conſtantinople, appear to riſe above each other in beautiful order[31]. About a century after the death of the founder, the new building, extending on one ſide up the harbour, and on the other along the Propontis, already covered the narrow ridge of the ſixth, and the broad ſummit of the ſeventh hill. The neceſſity of protecting thoſe ſuburbs from the inceſſant inroads of the Barbarians, engaged the younger Theodoſius to ſurround his capital with an adequate and permanent incloſure of walls[32]. From the eaſtern promontory to the golden gate, the extreme length of

[31] Codinus Antiquitat. Conſt. p. 12. He aſſigns the church of St. Antony as the boundary on the ſide of the harbour. It is mentioned in Ducange, l. iv. c. 6.; but I have tried, without ſucceſs, to diſcover the exact place where it was ſituated.

[32] The new wall of Theodoſius was conſtructed in the year 413. In 447 it was thrown down by an earthquake, and rebuilt in three months by the diligence of the præfect Cyrus. The ſuburb of the Blachernæ was firſt taken into the city in the reign of Heraclius. Ducange Conſt. l. i. c. 10, 11.

Conſtan-

CHAP. XVII.

Conſtantinople was about three Roman miles [33]; the circumference meaſured between ten and eleven; and the ſurface might be computed as equal to about two thouſand Engliſh acres. It is impoſſible to juſtify the vain and credulous exaggerations of modern travellers, who have ſometimes ſtretched the limits of Conſtantinople over the adjacent villages of the European, and even of the Aſiatic coaſt [34]. But the ſuburbs of Pera and Galata, though ſituate beyond the harbour, may deſerve to be conſidered as a part of the city [35]; and this addition may perhaps authoriſe the meaſure of a Byzantine hiſtorian, who aſſigns ſixteen Greek (about fourteen Roman) miles for the circumference of his native city [36]. Such an extent may ſeem not unworthy of an Imperial re-

[33] The meaſurement is expreſſed in the Notitia by 14,075 feet. It is reaſonable to ſuppoſe that theſe were Greek feet; the proportion of which has been ingeniouſly determined by M. d'Anville. He compares the 180 feet with the 78 Haſhemite cubits, which in different writers are aſſigned for the height of St. Sophia. Each of theſe cubits was equal to 27 French inches.

[34] The accurate Thevenot (l. i. c. 15.) walked in one hour and three quarters round two of the ſides of the triangle, from the Kioſk of the Seraglio to the ſeven towers. D'Anville examines with care, and receives with confidence, this deciſive teſtimony, which gives a circumference of ten or twelve miles. The extravagant computation of Tournefort (Lettre XI.) of thirty-four or thirty miles, without including Scutari, is a ſtrange departure from his uſual character.

[35] The fycæ, or fig-trees, formed the thirteenth region, and were very much embelliſhed by Juſtinian. It has ſince borne the names of Pera and Galata. The etymology of the former is obvious; that of the latter is unknown. See Ducange Conſt. l. i. c. 22. and Gyllius de Byzant. l. iv. c. 10.

[36] One hundred and eleven ſtadia, which may be tranſlated into modern Greek miles each of ſeven ſtadia, or 660, ſometimes only 600 French toiſes. See d'Anville Meſures Itineraires, p. 53.

CHAP. XVII.

fidence. Yet Conſtantinople muſt yield to Babylon and Thebes [37], to ancient Rome, to London, and even to Paris [38].

Progreſs of the work.

The maſter of the Roman world, who aſpired to erect an eternal monument of the glories of his reign, could employ in the proſecution of that great work the wealth, the labour, and all that yet remained of the genius of obedient millions. Some eſtimate may be formed of the expence beſtowed with Imperial liberality on the foundation of Conſtantinople, by the allowance of about two millions five hundred thouſand pounds for the conſtruction of the walls, the porticoes, and the aqueducts [39]. The foreſts that overſhadowed the ſhores of the Euxine, and the celebrated quarries of white marble in the little iſland of Proconneſus, ſupplied an inexhauſtible ſtock of materials, ready to be conveyed, by the convenience of a ſhort water-carriage, to the harbour of Byzantium [40]. A multitude of labourers and artificers

[37] When the ancient texts, which deſcribe the ſize of Babylon and Thebes, are ſettled, the exaggerations reduced, and the meaſures aſcertained, we find that thoſe famous cities filled the great but not incredible circumference of about twenty-five or thirty miles. Compare d'Anville Mem. de l'Academie, tom. xxviii. p. 235, with his Deſcription de l'Egypte, p. 201, 202.

[38] If we divide Conſtantinople and Paris into equal ſquares of 50 French *toiſes*, the former contains 850, and the latter 1160 of thoſe diviſions.

[39] Six hundred centenaries, or ſixty thouſand pounds weight of gold. This ſum is taken from Codinus Antiquit. Conſt. p. 11.; but unleſs that contemptible author had derived his information from ſome purer ſources, he would probably have been unacquainted with ſo obſolete a mode of reckoning.

[40] For the foreſts of the Black Sea, conſult Tournefort, Lettre XVI.: for the marble quarries of Proconneſus, ſee Strabo, l. xiii. p. 588.

artificers urged the concluſion of the work with inceſſant toil: but the impatience of Conſtantine ſoon diſcovered, that, in the decline of the arts, the ſkill as well as numbers of his architects bore a very unequal proportion to the greatneſs of his deſigns. The magiſtrates of the moſt diſtant provinces were therefore directed to inſtitute ſchools, to appoint profeſſors, and by the hopes of rewards and privileges, to engage in the ſtudy and practice of architecture a ſufficient number of ingenious youths, who had received a liberal education [41]. The buildings of the new city were executed by ſuch artificers as the reign of Conſtantine could afford; but they were decorated by the hands of the moſt celebrated maſters of the age of Pericles and Alexander. To revive the genius of Phidias and Lyſippus, ſurpaſſed indeed the power of a Roman emperor; but the immortal productions which they had bequeathed to poſterity were expoſed without defence to the rapacious vanity of a deſpot. By his commands the cities of Greece and Aſia were deſpoiled of their moſt valuable ornaments [42]. The trophies

p. 588. The latter had already furniſhed the materials of the ſtately buildings of Cyzicus.

[41] See the Codex Theodoſ. l. xiii. tit. iv. leg. 1. This law is dated in the year 334, and was addreſſed to the præfect of Italy, whoſe juriſdiction extended over Africa. The commentary of Godefroy on the whole title well deſerves to be conſulted.

[42] Conſtantinopolis dedicatur pœne omnium urbium ſuditate. Hieronym. Chron. p. 181. See Codinus, p. 8, 9. The author of the Antiquitat. Conſt. l. iii. (apud Banduri Imp. Orient. tom. i. p. 41.) enumerates Rome, Sicily, Antioch, Athens, and a long liſt of other cities. The provinces of Greece and Aſia Minor may be ſuppoſed to have yielded the richeſt booty.

CHAP. XVII.

of memorable wars, the objects of religious veneration, the most finished statues of the gods and heroes, of the sages and poets, of ancient times, contributed to the splendid triumph of Constantinople; and gave occasion to the remark of the historian Cedrenus [43], who observes, with some enthusiasm, that nothing seemed wanting except the souls of the illustrious men whom those admirable monuments were intended to represent. But it is not in the city of Constantine, nor in the declining period of an empire, when the human mind was depressed by civil and religious slavery, that we should seek for the souls of Homer and of Demosthenes.

Edifices.

During the siege of Byzantium, the conqueror had pitched his tent on the commanding eminence of the second hill. To perpetuate the memory of his success, he chose the same advantageous position for the principal Forum [44]; which appears to have been of a circular, or rather elliptical form. The two opposite entrances formed triumphal arches; the porticoes, which inclosed it on every side, were filled with statues; and the centre of the Forum was occupied by a lofty column, of which a mutilated fragment is now degraded by the appellation of the *burnt pillar*. This column was erected on a pedestal of white

[43] Hist. Compend. p. 369. He describes the statue, or rather bust of Homer with a degree of taste which plainly indicates that Cedrenus copied the style of a more fortunate age.

[44] Zosim. l. 2. p. 105. Chron. Alexandrin. vel Paschal, p. 284. Ducange Const. l. i. c. 24. Even the last of those writers seems to confound the Forum of Constantine with the Augusteum, or court of the palace. I am not satisfied whether I have properly distinguished what belongs to the one and the other.

marble twenty feet high; and was compoſed of ten pieces of porphyry, each of which meaſured about ten feet in height, and about thirty-three in circumference[45]. On the ſummit of the pillar, above one hundred and twenty feet from the ground, ſtood the coloſſal ſtatue of Apollo. It was of bronze, had been tranſported either from Athens or from a town of Phrygia, and was ſuppoſed to be the work of Phidias. The artiſt had repreſented the god of day, or, as it was afterwards interpreted, the emperor Conſtantine himſelf, with a ſceptre in his right hand, the globe of the world in his left, and a crown of rays glittering on his head[46]. The Circus, or Hippodrome, was a ſtately building about four hundred paces in length, and one hundred in breadth[47]. The ſpace between the two *metæ* or goals was filled with ſtatues and obeliſks; and we may ſtill remark a very ſingular fragment of antiquity; the bodies of three ſerpents, twiſted into one pillar of braſs. Their triple heads had once ſupported the golden tripod which, after the defeat of Xerxes, was conſecrated in the temple of

[45] The moſt tolerable account of this column is given by Pocock. Deſcription of the Eaſt, vol. ii. part ii p. 131. But it is ſtill in many inſtances perplexed and unſatisfactory.

[46] Ducange Conſt. l. i. c. 24. p. 76. and his notes ad Alexiad. p. 382. The ſtatue of Conſtantine or Apollo was thrown down under the reign of Alexis Comnenus.

[47] Tournefort (Lettre XII.) computes the Atmeidan at four hundred paces. If he means geometrical paces of five feet each, it was three hundred *toiſes* in length, about forty more than the great Circus of Rome. See d'Anville Meſures Itineraries, p. 73.

CHAP. XVII.

Delphi by the victorious Greeks [48]. The beauty of the Hippodrome has been long ſince defaced by the rude hands of the Turkiſh conquerors; but, under the ſimilar appellation of Atmeidan, it ſtill ſerves as a place of exerciſe for their horſes. From the throne, whence the emperor viewed the Circenſian games, a winding ſtaircaſe [49] deſcended to the palace; a magnificent edifice, which ſcarcely yielded to the reſidence of Rome itſelf, and which, together with the dependent courts, gardens, and porticoes, covered a conſiderable extent of ground upon the banks of the Propontis between the Hippodrome and the church of St. Sophia [50]. We might likewiſe celebrate

[48] The guardians of the moſt holy relics would rejoice if they were able to produce ſuch a chain of evidence as may be alleged on this occaſion. See Banduri ad Antiquitat. Conſt. p. 668. Gyllius de Byzant. l. ii. c. 13. 1. The original conſecration of the tripod and pillar in the temple of Delphi may be proved from Herodotus and Pauſanias. 2. The Pagan Zoſimus agrees with the three eccleſiaſtical hiſtorians, Euſebius, Socrates, and Sozomen, that the ſacred ornaments of the temple of Delphi were removed to Conſtantinople by the order of Conſtantine; and among theſe the ſerpentine pillar of the Hippodrome is particularly mentioned. 3. All the European travellers who have viſited Conſtantinople, from Buondelmonte to Pocock, deſcribe it in the ſame place, and almoſt in the ſame manner; the differences between them are occaſioned only by the injuries which it has ſuſtained from the Turks. Mahomet the Second broke the under-jaw of one of the ſerpents with a ſtroke of his battle-axe. Thevenot, l. i. c. 17.

[49] The Latin name *Cochlea* was adopted by the Greeks, and very frequently occurs in the Byzantine hiſtory. Ducange Conſt. l. ii. c. 1. p. 104.

[50] There are three topographical points which indicate the ſituation of the palace. 1. The ſtaircaſe, which connected it with the Hippodrome or Atmeidan. 2. A ſmall artificial port on the Propontis, from whence there was an eaſy aſcent, by a flight of marble ſteps,

to

CHAP. XVII.

celebrate the baths, which ſtill retained the name of Zeuxippus, after they had been enriched, by the munificence of Conſtantine, with lofty columns, various marbles, and above threeſcore ſtatues of bronze[51]. But we ſhould deviate from the deſign of this hiſtory, if we attempted minutely to deſcribe the different buildings or quarters of the city. It may be ſufficient to obſerve, that whatever could adorn the dignity of a great capital, or contribute to the benefit or pleaſure of its numerous inhabitants, was contained within the walls of Conſtantinople. A particular deſcription, compoſed about a century after its foundation, enumerates a capitol or ſchool of learning, a circus, two theatres, eight public, and one hundred and fifty-three private, baths, fifty-two porticoes, five granaries, eight aqueducts or reſervoirs of water, four ſpacious halls for the meetings of the ſenate or courts of juſtice, fourteen churches, fourteen palaces, and four thouſand three hundred and eighty eight houſes, which, for their ſize or beauty, deſerved to be

to the gardens of the palace. 3. The Auguſteum was a ſpacious court, one ſide of which was occupied by the front of the palace, and another by the church of St. Sophia.

[51] Zeuxippus was an epithet of Jupiter, and the baths were a part of old Byzantium. The difficulty of aſſigning their true ſituation has not been felt by Ducange. Hiſtory ſeems to connect them with St. Sophia and the palace; but the original plan, inſerted in Banduri, places them on the other ſide of the city, near the harbour. For their beauties, ſee Chron. Paſchal, p. 284, and Gyll. de Byzant. l. ii. c. 7. Chriſtodorus (ſee Antiquitat. Conſt. l. vii. compoſed inſcriptions in verſe for each of the ſtatues. He was a Theban poet in genius as well as in birth:

Bœotum in craſſo jurares aere natum.

CHAP. XVII.

diſtinguiſhed from the multitude of plebeian habitations [52].

Population.

The populouſneſs of this favoured city was the next and moſt ſerious object of the attention of its founder. In the dark ages which ſucceeded the tranſlation of the empire, the remote and the immediate conſequences of that memorable event were ſtrangely confounded by the vanity of the Greeks, and the credulity of the Latins [53]. It was aſſerted and believed, that all the noble families of Rome, the ſenate, and the equeſtrian order, with their innumerable attendants, had followed their emperor to the banks of the Propontis; that a ſpurious race of ſtrangers and plebeians was left to poſſeſs the ſolitude of the ancient capital; and that the lands of Italy, long ſince converted into gardens, were at once deprived of cultivation and inhabitants [54]. In the courſe of this hiſtory, ſuch exaggerations will be reduced to their juſt

[52] See the Notitia. Rome only reckoned 1780 large houſes, *domus*; but the word muſt have had a more dignified ſignification. No *inſulæ* are mentioned at Conſtantinople. The old capital conſiſted of 424 ſtreets, the new of 322.

[53] Liutprand Legatio ad Imp. Nicephorum, p. 153. The modern Greeks have ſtrangely diſfigured the antiquities of Conſtantinople. We might excuſe the errors of the Turkiſh or Arabian writers; but it is ſomewhat aſtoniſhing, that the Greeks, who had acceſs to the authentic materials preſerved in their own language, ſhould prefer fiction to truth, and looſe tradition to genuine hiſtory. In a ſingle page of Codinus we may detect twelve unpardonable miſtakes; the reconciliation of Severus and Niger, the marriage of their ſon and daughter, the ſiege of Byzantium by the Macedonians, the invaſion of the Gauls, which recalled Severus to Rome, the *ſixty* years which elapſed from his death to the foundation of Conſtantinople, &c.

[54] Monteſquieu, Grandeur et Decadence des Romains, c. 17.

value;

CHAP. XVII.

value: yet, since the growth of Constantinople cannot be ascribed to the general increase of mankind and of industry, it must be admitted, that this artificial colony was raised at the expence of the ancient cities of the empire. Many opulent senators of Rome, and of the Eastern provinces, were probably invited by Constantine to adopt for their country the fortunate spot which he had chosen for his own residence. The invitations of a master are scarcely to be distinguished from commands; and the liberality of the emperor obtained a ready and cheerful obedience. He bestowed on his favourites the palaces which he had built in the several quarters of the city, assigned them lands and pensions for the support of their dignity [55], and alienated the demesnes of Pontus and Asia, to grant hereditary estates by the easy tenure of maintaining a house in the capital [56]. But these encouragements and obligations soon became superfluous, and were gradually abolished. Wherever the seat of government is fixed, a

[55] Themist. Orat. iii. p. 48. edit. Hardouin. Sozomen, l. ii. c. 3. Zosim. l. ii. p. 107. Anonym. Valesian. p. 715. If we could credit Codinus (p. 10.), Constantine built houses for the senators on the exact model of their Roman palaces, and gratified them, as well as himself, with the pleasure of an agreeable surprise; but the whole story is full of fictions and inconsistencies.

[56] The law by which the younger Theodosius, in the year 438, abolished this tenure, may be found among the Novellæ of that emperor at the head of the Theodosian Code, tom. vi. nov. 12. M. de Tillemont (Hist. des Empereurs, tom. iv. p. 371.) has evidently mistaken the nature of these estates. With a grant from the Imperial demesnes, the same condition was accepted as a favour which would justly have been deemed a hardship, if it had been imposed upon private property.

con-

CHAP. XVII.

conſiderable part of the public revenue will be expended by the prince himſelf, by his miniſters, by the officers of juſtice, and by the domeſtics of the palace. The moſt wealthy of the provincials will be attracted by the powerful motives of intereſt and duty, of amuſement and curioſity. A third and more numerous claſs of inhabitants will inſenſibly be formed, of ſervants, of artificers, and of merchants, who derive their ſubſiſtence from their own labour, and from the wants or luxury of the ſuperior ranks. In leſs than a century, Conſtantinople diſputed with Rome itſelf the pre-eminence of riches and numbers. New piles of buildings, crowded together with too little regard to health or convenience, ſcarcely allowed the intervals of narrow ſtreets for the perpetual throng of men, of horſes, and of carriages. The allotted ſpace of ground was inſufficient to contain the increaſing people; and the additional foundations, which, on either ſide, were advanced into the ſea, might alone have compoſed a very conſiderable city [57].

Privileges.

The frequent and regular diſtributions of wine and oil, of corn or bread, of money or proviſions, had almoſt exempted the pooreſt citizens of Rome from the neceſſity of labour. The magnificence of the firſt Cæſars was in ſome meaſure imitated

57 The paſſages of Zoſimus, of Eunapius, of Sozomen, and of Agathias, which relate to the increaſe of buildings and inhabitants at Conſtantinople, are collected and connected by Gyllius de Byzant. l. i. c. 3. Sidonius Apollinaris (in Panegyr Anthem. 56 p. 290. edit. Sirmond) deſcribes the moles that were puſhed forwards into the ſea; they conſiſted of the famous Puzzolan ſand, which hardens in the water.

by

CHAP. XVII.

by the founder of Conſtantinople[58]: but his liberality, however it might excite the applauſe of the people, has incurred the cenſure of poſterity. A nation of legiſlators and conquerors might aſſert their claim to the harveſts of Africa, which had been purchaſed with their blood; and it was artfully contrived by Auguſtus, that, in the enjoyment of plenty, the Romans ſhould loſe the memory of freedom. But the prodigality of Conſtantine could not be excuſed by any conſideration either of public or private intereſt; and the annual tribute of corn impoſed upon Egypt for the benefit of his new capital, was applied to feed a lazy and indolent populace, at the expence of the huſbandmen of an induſtrious province[59]. Some other regulations of this emperor are leſs liable to blame, but they are leſs deſerving of notice. He divided Conſtantinople into fourteen regions or quarters[60], dignified the public council with

[58] Sozomen, l. ii. c. 3. Philoſtorg. l. ii. c. 9. Codin. Antiquitat. Conſt. p. 8. It appears by Socrates, l. ii. c. 13. that the daily allowances of the city conſiſted of eight myriads of μεδιμνοι, which we may either tranſlate with Valeſius by the words modii of corn, or conſider as expreſſive of the number of loaves of bread.

[59] See Cod. Theodoſ. l. xiii. and xiv. and Cod. Juſtinian. Edict. xii. tom. ii. p. 648. edit. Genev. See the beautiful complaint of Rome in the poem of Claudian de Bell. Gildonico, ver. 46—64.

Cum ſubiit par Roma mihi, diviſaque ſumſit
Æquales aurora togas; Ægyptia rura
In partem ceſſere novam.

[60] The regions of Conſtantinople are mentioned in the code of Juſtinian, and particularly deſcribed in the Notitia of the younger Theodoſius; but as the four laſt of them are not included within the wall of Conſtantine, it may be doubted whether this diviſion of the city ſhould be referred to the founder.

CHAP. XVII.

the appellation of Senate[61], communicated to the citizens the privileges of Italy[62], and beſtowed on the riſing city the title of Colony, the firſt and moſt favoured daughter of ancient Rome. The venerable parent ſtill maintained the legal and acknowledged ſupremacy, which was due to her age, to her dignity, and to the remembrance of her former greatneſs[63].

Dedication, A.D. 330 or 334.

As Conſtantine urged the progreſs of the work with the impatience of a lover, the walls, the porticoes, and the principal edifices were completed in a few years, or, according to another account, in a few months[64]: but this extraordinary diligence

[61] Senatum conſtituit ſecundi ordinis; *Claros* vocavit. Anonym. Valeſian. p. 715. The ſenators of old Rome were ſtiled *Clariſſimi*. See a curious note of Valeſius and Ammian. Marcellin. xxii. 9. From the eleventh Epiſtle of Julian, it ſhould ſeem that the place of ſenator was conſidered as a burthen, rather than as an honour: but the Abbé de la Bleterie (Vie de Jovien, tom. ii. p. 371.) has ſhewn that this epiſtle could not relate to Conſtantinople. Might we not read, inſtead of the celebrated name of Βυζαντιοις, the obſcure but more probable word Βισανθοις? Biſanthe or Rhœdeſtus, now Rhodoſto, was a ſmall maritime city of Thrace. See Stephan. Byz. de Urbibus, p. 225. and Cellar. Geograph. tom. i. p. 849.

[62] Cod. Theodoſ. l. xiv. 13. The Commentary of Godefroy (tom. v. p. 220.) is long, but perplexed; nor indeed is it eaſy to aſcertain in what the Jus Italicum could conſiſt, after the freedom of the city had been communicated to the whole empire.

[63] Julian (Orat. i. p. 8.) celebrates Conſtantinople as not leſs ſuperior to all other cities, than ſhe was inferior to Rome itſelf. His learned commentator (Spanheim, p. 75, 76.) juſtifies this language by ſeveral parallel and contemporary inſtances. Zoſimus, as well as Socrates and Sozomen, flouriſhed after the diviſion of the empire between the two ſons of Theodoſius, which eſtabliſhed a perfect *equality* between the old and the new capital.

[64] Codinus (Antiquitat. p. 8.) affirms, that the foundations of Conſtantinople were laid in the year of the world 5837 (A.D. 329), on the 26th of September, and that the city was dedicated the 11th of

gence ſhould excite the leſs admiration, ſince many of the buildings were finiſhed in ſo haſty and imperfect a manner, that, under the ſucceeding reign, they were preſerved with difficulty from impending ruin [65]. But while they diſplayed the vigour and freſhneſs of youth, the founder prepared to celebrate the dedication of his city [66]. The games and largeſſes which crowned the pomp of this memorable feſtival may eaſily be ſuppoſed: but there is one circumſtance of a more ſingular and permanent nature, which ought not entirely to be overlooked. As often as the birth-day of the city returned, the ſtatue of Conſtantine, framed, by his order, of gilt wood, and bearing in his right-hand a ſmall image of the genius of the place, was erected on a triumphal car. The guards, carrying white tapers, and clothed in their richeſt apparel, accompanied the ſolemn proceſſion as it moved through the Hippodrome.

of May 5838 (A. D. 330.). He connects theſe dates with ſeveral characteriſtic epochs, but they contradict each other; the authority of Codinus is of little weight, and the ſpace which he aſſigns muſt appear inſufficient. The term of ten years is given us by Julian (Orat. i. p. 8.), and Spanheim labours to eſtabliſh the truth of it (p. 69—75.), by the help of two paſſages from Themiſtius (Orat. iv. p. 58.) and of Philoſtorgius (l. ii. c. 9.), which form a period from the year 324 to the year 334. Modern critics are divided concerning this point of chronology, and their different ſentiments are very accurately diſcuſſed by Tillemont, Hiſt. des Empereurs, tom. iv. p. 619—625.

[65] Themiſtius, Orat. iii. p. 47. Zoſim. l. ii. p. 108. Conſtantine himſelf, in one of his laws (Cod. Thod. l. xv. tit. i.), betrays his impatience.

[66] Cedrenus and Zonaras, faithful to the mode of ſuperſtition which prevailed in their own times, aſſure us, that Conſtantinople was conſecrated to the Virgin Mother of God.

When

CHAP. XVII.

When it was oppoſite to the throne of the reigning emperor, he roſe from his ſeat, and with grateful reverence adored the memory of his predeceſſor[67]. At the feſtival of the dedication, an edict, engraved on a column of marble, beſtowed the title of SECOND or NEW ROME on the city of Conſtantine[68]. But the name of Conſtantinople[69] has prevailed over that honourable epithet; and, after the revolution of fourteen centuries, ſtill perpetuates the fame of its author[70].

Form of government.

The foundation of a new capital is naturally connected with the eſtabliſhment of a new form of civil and military adminiſtration. The diſtinct view of the complicated ſyſtem of policy, introduced by Diocletian, improved by Conſtantine,

[67] The earlieſt and moſt complete account of this extraordinary ceremony may be found in the Alexandrian Chronicle, p. 285. Tillemont, and the other friends of Conſtantine, who are offended with the air of Paganiſm which ſeems unworthy of a Chriſtian prince, had a right to conſider it as doubtful, but they were not authoriſed to omit the mention of it.

[68] Sozomen, l. ii. c. 2. Ducange C. P. l. i. c. 6. Velut ipſius Romæ nLam, is the expreſſion of Auguſtin. de Civitat. Dei, l. v. c. 25.

[69] Eutropius, l. x. c. 8. Julian. Orat. i. p 8. Ducange C. P. l. i. c. 5. The name of Conſtantinople is extant on the medals of Conſtantine.

[70] The lively Fontenelle (Dialogues des Morts, xii.) affects to deride the vanity of human ambition, and ſeems to triumph in the diſappointment of Conſtantine, whoſe immortal name is now loſt in the vulgar appellation of Iſtambol, a Turkiſh corruption of εἰς τὴν πόλιν. Yet the original name is ſtill preſerved, 1. By the nations of Europe. 2. By the modern Greeks. 3. By the Arabs, whoſe writings are diffuſed over the wide extent of their conqueſts in Aſia and Africa. See d'Herbelot Bibliotheque Orientale, p. 275. 4. By the more learned Turks, and by the emperor himſelf in his public mandates. Cantemir's Hiſtory of the Othman Empire, p. 51.

and

CHAP. XVII.

and completed by his immediate ſucceſſors, may not only amuſe the fancy by the ſingular picture of a great empire, but will tend to illuſtrate the ſecret and internal cauſes of its rapid decay. In the purſuit of any remarkable inſtitution, we may be frequently led into the more early or the more recent times of the Roman hiſtory; but the proper limits of this enquiry will be included within a period of about one hundred and thirty years, from the acceſſion of Conſtantine to the publication of the Theodoſian code[71]; from which, as well as from the *Notitia* of the eaſt and weſt[72], we derive the moſt copious and authentic information of the ſtate of the empire. This variety of objects will ſuſpend, for ſome time, the courſe of the narrative; but the interruption will be cenſured only by thoſe readers who are inſenſible to the importance of laws and manners, while they peruſe, with eager curioſity, the tranſient intrigues of a court, or the accidental event of a battle.

Hierarchy of the ſtate.

The manly pride of the Romans, content with ſubſtantial power, had left to the vanity of the eaſt the forms and ceremonies of oſtentatious

[71] The Theodoſian code was promulgated A. D. 438. See the Prolegomena of Godefroy, c. i. p 185.

[72] Pancirolus, in his elaborate Commentary, aſſigns to the Notitia a date almoſt ſimilar to that of the Theodoſian code; but his proofs, or rather conjectures, are extremely feeble. I ſhould be rather inclined to place this uſeful work between the final diviſion of the empire (A. D. 395), and the ſucceſsful invaſion of Gaul by the Barbarians (A. D. 407). See Hiſtoire des anciens Peuples de l'Europe, tom. vii. p. 40.

greatneſs.

CHAP. XVII.

greatneſs [73]. But when they loſt even the ſemblance of thoſe virtues which were derived from their ancient freedom, the ſimplicity of Roman manners was inſenſibly corrupted by the ſtately affectation of the courts of Aſia. The diſtinctions of perſonal merit and influence, ſo conſpicuous in a republic, ſo feeble and obſcure under a monarchy, were aboliſhed by the deſpotiſm of the emperors; who ſubſtituted in their room a ſevere ſubordination of rank and office, from the titled ſlaves who were ſeated on the ſteps of the throne, to the meaneſt inſtruments of arbitrary power. This multitude of abject dependents was intereſted in the ſupport of the actual government, from the dread of a revolution, which might at once confound their hopes, and intercept the reward of their ſervices. In this divine hierarchy (for ſuch it is frequently ſtyled), every rank was marked with the moſt ſcrupulous exactneſs, and its dignity was diſplayed in a variety of trifling and ſolemn ceremonies, which it was a ſtudy to learn, and a ſacrilege to neglect [74]. The purity of the Latin language was debaſed, by adopting, in the intercourſe of pride and flattery, a profuſion

[73] Scilicet externæ ſuperbiæ ſueto, non inerat notitia noſtri (perhaps *noſtræ*); apud quos vis Imperii valet, inania tranſmittuntur. Tacit. Annal. xv. 31. The gradation from the ſtyle of freedom and ſimplicity, to that of form and ſervitude, may be traced in the Epiſtles of Cicero, of Pliny, and of Symmachus.

[74] The emperor Gratian, after confirming a law of precedency publiſhed by Valentinian, the father of his *Divinity*, thus continues: Siquis igitur indebitum ſibi locum uſurpaverit, nulla ſe ignoratione defendat; ſitque plane *ſacrilegii* reus, qui *divina* præcepta neglexerit. Cod. Theod. l. vi. tit. v. leg. 2.

of

of epithets, which Tully would ſcarcely have underſtood, and which Auguſtus would have rejected with indignation. The principal officers of the empire were ſaluted, even by the ſovereign himſelf, with the deceitful titles of your *Sincerity*, your *Gravity*, your *Excellency*, your *Eminency*, your *ſublime and wonderful Magnitude*, your *illuſtrious and magnificent Highneſs* [75]. The codicils or patents of their office were curiouſly emblazoned with ſuch emblems as were beſt adapted to explain its nature and high dignity; the image or portrait of the reigning emperors; a triumphal car; the book of mandates placed on a table, covered with a rich carpet, and illuminated by four tapers; the allegorical figures of the provinces which they governed; or the appellations and ſtandards of the troops whom they commanded. Some of theſe official enſigns were really exhibited in their hall of audience; others preceded their pompous march whenever they appeared in public; and every circumſtance of their demeanour, their dreſs, their ornaments, and their train, was calculated to inſpire a deep reverence for the repreſentatives of ſupreme majeſty. By a philoſophic obſerver, the ſyſtem of the Roman government might have been miſtaken for a ſplendid theatre, filled with players of every character and degree, who repeated the language, and imitated the paſſions, of their original model [76].

[75] Conſult the *Notitia Dignitatum*, at the end of the Theodoſian Code, tom. vi. p. 316.

[76] Pancirolus ad Notitiam utriuſque Imperii, p. 39. But his explanations are obſcure, and he does not ſufficiently diſtinguiſh the painted emblems from the effective enſigns of office.

CHAP. XVII.

Three ranks of honour.

All the magiſtrates of ſufficient importance to find a place in the general ſtate of the empire, were accurately divided into three claſſes. 1. The *Illuſtrious*. 2. The *Spectabiles*, or *Reſpectable*: And, 3. The *Clariſſimi*; whom we may tranſlate by the word *Honourable*. In the times of Roman ſimplicity, the laſt-mentioned epithet was uſed only as a vague expreſſion of deference, till it became at length the peculiar and appropriated title of all who were members of the ſenate[77], and conſequently of all who, from that venerable body, were ſelected to govern the provinces. The vanity of thoſe who, from their rank and office, might claim a ſuperior diſtinction above the reſt of the ſenatorial order, was long afterwards indulged with the new appellation of *Reſpectable*: but the title of *Illuſtrious* was always reſerved to ſome eminent perſonages who were obeyed or reverenced by the two ſubordinate claſſes. It was communicated only, I. To the conſuls and patricians; II. To the prætorian præfects, with the præfects of Rome and Conſtantinople; III. To the maſters general of the cavalry and the infantry; and, IV. To the ſeven miniſters of the palace, who exerciſed their *ſacred* functions about the perſon of the emperor[78]. Among thoſe illuſtrious magiſtrates who were eſteemed co-ordinate with each other, the ſeniority of appointment

[77] In the Pandects, which may be referred to the reigns of the Antonines, *Clariſſimus* is the ordinary and legal title of a ſenator.

[78] Pancirol. p. 12—17. I have not taken any notice of the two inferior ranks, *Perfectiſſimus*, and *Egregius*, which were given to many perſons, who were not raiſed to the ſenatorial dignity.

gave

gave place to the union of dignities[79]. By the expedient of honorary codicils, the emperors, who were fond of multiplying their favours, might ſometimes gratify the vanity, though not the ambition, of impatient courtiers[80].

The conſuls.

I. As long as the Roman conſuls were the firſt magiſtrates of a free ſtate, they derived their right to power from the choice of the people. As long as the emperors condeſcended to diſguiſe the ſervitude which they impoſed, the conſuls were ſtill elected by the real or apparent ſuffrage of the ſenate. From the reign of Diocletian, even theſe veſtiges of liberty were aboliſhed, and the ſucceſsful candidates who were inveſted with the annual honours of the conſulſhip, affected to deplore the humiliating condition of their predeceſſors. The Scipios and the Catos had been reduced to ſolicit the votes of plebeians, to paſs through the tedious and expenſive forms of a popular election, and to expoſe their dignity to the ſhame of a public refuſal; while their own happier fate had reſerved them for an age and government in which the rewards of virtue were aſſigned by the unerring wiſdom of a gracious ſovereign[81]. In the epiſtles which the emperor addreſſed to the two conſuls elect, it was declared, that they were

79 Cod. Theodoſ. l. vi. tit. vi. The rules of precedency are aſcertained with the moſt minute accuracy by the emperors, and illuſtrated with equal prolixity by their learned interpreter.

80 Cod. Theodoſ. l. vi. tit. xxii.

81 Auſonius (in Gratiarum Actione) baſely expatiates on this unworthy topic, which is managed by Mamertinus (Panegyr. Vet. xi. 16. 19.) with ſomewhat more freedom and ingenuity.

CHAP. XVII.

created by his ſole authority [82]. Their names and portraits, engraved on gilt tablets of ivory, were diſperſed over the empire as preſents to the provinces, the cities, the magiſtrates, the ſenate, and the people [83]. Their ſolemn inauguration was performed at the place of the Imperial reſidence; and, during a period of one hundred and twenty years, Rome was conſtantly deprived of the preſence of her ancient magiſtrates [84]. On the morning of the firſt of January, the conſuls aſſumed the enſigns of their dignity. Their dreſs was a robe of purple, embroidered in ſilk and gold, and ſometimes ornamented with coſtly gems [85].

[82] Cum de Conſulibus in annum creandis, ſolus mecum volutarem . . . te Conſulem et deſignavi, et declaravi, et priorem nuncupavi; are ſome of the expreſſions employed by the emperor Gratian to his preceptor the poet Auſonius.

[83] Immanesque . . . . dentes
Qui ſecti ferro in tabulas auroque micantes,
Inſcripti rutilum cœlato Conſule nomen
Per proceres et vulgus eant.
Claud. in ii Conſ. Stilichon. 456.
Montfaucon has repreſented ſome of theſe tablets or dypticks; ſee Supplement à l'Antiquité expliquée, tom. iii. p. 220.

[84] Conſule lætatur poſt plurima ſæcula viſo
Pallanteus apex: agnoſcunt roſtra curules
Auditas quondam proavis: deſuetaque cingit
Regiùs auratis Fora faſcibus Ulpia lictor.
Claudian in vi Conſ. Honorii, 643.
From the reign of Carus to the ſixth conſulſhip of Honorius, there was an interval of one hundred and twenty years, during which the emperors were always abſent from Rome on the firſt day of January. See the Chronologie de Tillemont, tom. iii. iv. and v.

[85] See Claudian in Conſ. Prob. et Olybrii 178, &c. and in iv Conſ. Honorii, 585, &c.; though in the latter it is not eaſy to ſeparate the ornaments of the emperor from thoſe of the conſul. Auſonius received, from the liberality of Gratian, a *veſtis palmata*, or robe of ſtate, in which the figure of the emperor Conſtantius was embroidered.

On

CHAP. XVII.

On this ſolemn occaſion they were attended by the moſt eminent officers of the ſtate and army, in the habit of ſenators; and the uſeleſs faſces, armed with the once formidable axes, were borne before them by the lictors[86]. The proceſſion moved from the palace[87] to the Forum, or principal ſquare of the city; where the conſuls aſcended their tribunal, and ſeated themſelves in the curule chairs, which were framed after the faſhion of ancient times. They immediately exerciſed an act of juriſdiction, by the manumiſſion of a ſlave, who was brought before them for that purpoſe; and the ceremony was intended to repreſent the celebrated action of the elder Brutus, the author of liberty and of the conſulſhip, when he admitted among his fellow-citizens the faithful Vindex, who had revealed the conſpiracy of the Tarquins[88]. The public feſtival was continued during ſeveral days in all the principal cities; in Rome, from cuſtom; in Conſtanti-

[86] Cernis et armorum proceres legumque potentes:
Patricios ſumunt habitus; et more Gabino
Diſcolor incedit legio, poſitiſque parumper
Bellorum ſignis, ſequitur vexilla Quirini.
Lictori cedunt aquilæ, ridetque togatus
Miles, et in mediis effulget curia caſtris.
Claud. in iv Conſ. Honorii, 5.
——*ſtrictaſque* procul radiare *ſecures*.
In Conſ. Prob. 229.

[87] See Valeſius ad Ammian. Marcellin. l. xxii. c. 7.

[88] Auſpice mox læto ſonuit clamore tribunal;
Te faſtos ineunte quater; ſolemnia ludit
Omnia libertas: deductum vindice morem
Lex ſervat, famuluſque jugo laxatis herili
Ducitur, et grato remeat ſecurior ictu.
Claudian in iv Conſ. Honorii, 611.

CHAP. XVII.

nople, from imitation; in Carthage, Antioch, and Alexandria, from the love of pleaſure and the ſuperfluity of wealth[89]. In the two capitals of the empire the annual games of the theatre, the circus, and the amphitheatre[90], coſt four thouſand pounds of gold, (about) one hundred and ſixty thouſand pounds ſterling: and if ſo heavy an expence ſurpaſſed the faculties or the inclination of the magiſtrates themſelves, the ſum was ſupplied from the Imperial treaſury[91]. As ſoon as the conſuls had diſcharged theſe cuſtomary duties, they were at liberty to retire into the ſhade of private life, and to enjoy, during the remainder of the year, the undiſturbed contemplation of their own greatneſs. They no longer preſided in the national councils; they no longer executed the reſolutions of peace or war. Their abilities (unleſs they were employed in more effective offices) were of little moment; and their names ſerved only as the legal date of the year in which they had filled the chair of Marius and of Cicero. Yet it was ſtill felt and acknowledged, in the laſt period of Roman ſervitude, that this empty name might be compared, and even pre-

[89] Celebrant quidem ſolemnes iſtos dies, omnes ubique urbes quæ ſub legibus agunt; et Roma de more, et Conſtantinopolis de imitatione, et Antiochia pro luxu, et diſcincta Carthago, et domus fluminis Alexandria, ſed Treviri Principis beneficio. Auſonius in Grat. Actione.

[90] Claudian (in Conſ. Mall. Theodori, 279—331.) deſcribes, in a lively and fanciful manner, the various games of the circus, the theatre, and the amphitheatre, exhibited by the new conſul. The ſanguinary combats of gladiators had already been prohibited.

[91] Procopius in Hiſt. Arcana, c. 26.

ferred,

ferred, to the poſſeſſion of ſubſtantial power. The title of conſul was ſtill the moſt ſplendid object of ambition, the nobleſt reward of virtue and loyalty. The emperors themſelves, who diſdained the faint ſhadow of the republic, were conſcious that they acquired an additional ſplendour and majeſty as often as they aſſumed the annual honours of the conſular dignity[92]. CHAP. XVII.

The proudeſt and moſt perfect ſeparation which can be found in any age or country, between the nobles and the people, is perhaps that of the Patricians and the Plebeians, as it was eſtabliſhed in the firſt age of the Roman republic. Wealth and honours, the offices of the ſtate, and the ceremonies of religion, were almoſt excluſively poſſeſſed by the former; who preſerving the purity of their blood with the moſt inſulting jealouſy[93], held their clients in a condition of ſpecious vaſſalage. But theſe diſtinctions, ſo incompatible with the ſpirit of a free people, were removed, after a long ſtruggle, by the perſevering efforts of the Tribunes. The moſt active and ſucceſsful of the Plebeians accumulated wealth, aſpired to ho- The Patricians.

[92] In Conſulatu honos ſine labore ſuſcipitur. (Mamertin in Panegyr. Vet. xi. 2.) This exalted idea of the conſulſhip is borrowed from an Oration (iii. p. 107.) pronounced by Julian in the ſervile court of Conſtantius. See the Abbé de la Bleterie (Memoires de l'Academie, tom. xxiv. p. 289.), who delights to purſue the veſtiges of the old conſtitution, and who ſometimes finds them in his copious fancy.

[93] Intermarriages between the Patricians and Plebeians were prohibited by the laws of the XII Tables; and the uniform operations of human nature may atteſt that the cuſtom ſurvived the law. See in Livy (iv. 1—6.), the pride of family urged by the conſul, and the rights of mankind aſſerted by the tribune Canuleius.

CHAP. XVII.

nours, deſerved triumphs, contracted alliances, and, after ſome generations, aſſumed the pride of ancient nobility[94]. The Patrician families, on the other hand, whoſe original number was never recruited till the end of the commonwealth, either failed in the ordinary courſe of nature, or were extinguiſhed in ſo many foreign and domeſtic wars, or, through a want of merit or fortune, inſenſibly mingled with the maſs of the people[95]. Very few remained who could derive their pure and genuine origin from the infancy of the city, or even from that of the republic, when Cæſar and Auguſtus, Claudius and Veſpaſian, created from the body of the ſenate a competent number of new Patrician families, in the hope of perpetuating an order, which was ſtill conſidered as honourable and ſacred[96]. But theſe artificial ſupplies (in

94 See the animated pictures drawn by Salluſt, in the Jugurthine war, of the pride of the nobles, and even of the virtuous Metellus, who was unable to brook the idea that the honour of the conſulſhip ſhould be beſtowed on the obſcure merit of his lieutenant Marius (c. 64.). Two hundred years before, the race of the Metelli themſelves were confounded among the Plebeians of Rome; and from the etymology of their name of *Cæcilius*, there is reaſon to believe that thoſe haughty nobles derived their origin from a ſutler.

95 In the year of Rome 800, very few remained, not only of the old Patrician families, but even of thoſe which had been created by Cæſar and Auguſtus. (Tacit. Annal. xi. 25.) The family of Scaurus (a branch of the Patrician Æmilii) was degraded ſo low that his father, who exerciſed the trade of a charcoal merchant, left him only ten ſlaves, and ſomewhat leſs than three hundred pounds ſterling. (Valerius Maximus, l. iv. c. 4. n. 11., Aurel. Victor in Scauro.) The family was ſaved from oblivion by the merit of the ſon.

96 Tacit. Annal. xi. 25. Dion Caſſius, l. iii. p. 693. The virtues of Agricola, who was created a Patrician by the emperor Veſpaſian,

CHAP. XVII.

(in which the reigning houſe was always included) were rapidly ſwept away by the rage of tyrants, by frequent revolutions, by the change of manners, and by the intermixture of nations[97]. Little more was left when Conſtantine aſcended the throne, than a vague and imperfect tradition, that the Patricians had once been the firſt of the Romans. To form a body of nobles, whoſe influence may reſtrain, while it ſecures the authority of the monarch, would have been very inconſiſtent with the character and policy of Conſtantine; but had he ſeriouſly entertained ſuch a deſign, it might have exceeded the meaſure of his power to ratify, by an arbitrary edict, an inſtitution which muſt expect the ſanction of time and of opinion. He revived, indeed, the title of PATRICIANS, but he revived it as a perſonal, not as an hereditary diſtinction. They yielded only to the tranſient ſuperiority of the annual conſuls; but they enjoyed the pre-eminence over all the great officers of ſtate, with the moſt familiar acceſs to the perſon of the prince. This honourable rank was beſtowed on them for life; and as they were uſually favourites, and miniſters who had grown old in the Imperial court, the true

ſpaſian, reflected honour on that ancient order; but his anceſtors had not any claim beyond an Equeſtrian nobility.

97 This failure would have been almoſt impoſſible if it were true, as Caſaubon compels Aurelius Victor to affirm (ad Sueton. in Cæſar. c. 42. See Hiſt. Auguſt. p. 203. and Caſaubon. Comment. p. 220.), that Veſpaſian created at once a thouſand Patrician families. But this extravagant number is too much even for the whole Senatorial order, unleſs we ſhould include all the Roman knights who were diſtinguiſhed by the permiſſion of wearing the laticlave.

etymology

CHAP. XVII.

etymology of the word was perverted by ignorance and flattery; and the Patricians of Conſtantine were reverenced as the adopted *Fathers* of the emperor and the republic [98].

The Prætorian præfects.

II. The fortunes of the Prætorian præfects were eſſentially different from thoſe of the conſuls and patricians. The latter ſaw their ancient greatneſs evaporate in a vain title. The former, riſing by degrees from the moſt humble condition, were inveſted with the civil and military adminiſtration of the Roman world. From the reign of Severus to that of Diocletian, the guards and the palace, the laws and the finances, the armies and the provinces, were intruſted to their ſuperintending care; and, like the Vizirs of the Eaſt, they held with one hand the ſeal, and with the other the ſtandard, of the empire. The ambition of the præfects, always formidable, and ſometimes fatal to the maſters whom they ſerved, was ſupported by the ſtrength of the Prætorian bands; but after thoſe haughty troops had been weakened by Diocletian, and finally ſuppreſſed by Conſtantine, the præfects, who ſurvived their fall, were reduced without difficulty to the ſtation of uſeful and obedient miniſters. When they were no longer reſponſible for the ſafety of the emperor's perſon, they reſigned the juriſdiction which they had hitherto claimed and exerciſed over all the departments of the palace. They were deprived by Conſtantine of all military command, as ſoon as they had ceaſed to lead into the

[98] Zoſimus, l. ii. p. 118.; and Godefroy ad Cod. Theodoſ. l. vi. tit. vi.

field,

field, under their immediate orders, the flower of the Roman troops; and at length, by a ſingular revolution, the captains of the guards were tranſformed into the civil magiſtrates of the provinces. According to the plan of government inſtituted by Diocletian, the four princes had each their Prætorian præfect; and, after the monarchy was once more united in the perſon of Conſtantine, he ſtill continued to create the ſame number of FOUR PRÆFECTS, and entruſted to their care the ſame provinces which they already adminiſtered. 1. The præfect of the Eaſt ſtretched his ample juriſdiction into the three parts of the globe which were ſubject to the Romans, from the cataracts of the Nile to the banks of the Phaſis, and from the mountains of Thrace to the frontiers of Perſia. 2. The important provinces of Pannonia, Dacia, Macedonia, and Greece, once acknowledged the authority of the præfect of Illyricum. 3. The power of the præfect of Italy was not confined to the country from whence he derived his title; it extended over the additional territory of Rhætia as far as the banks of the Danube, over the dependent iſlands of the Mediterranean, and over that part of the continent of Africa which lies between the confines of Cyrene and thoſe of Tingitania. 4. The præfect of the Gauls comprehended under that plural denomination the kindred provinces of Britain and Spain, and his authority was obeyed from the wall of Antoninus to the foot of Mount Atlas [99].

CHAP. XVII.

After

[99] Zoſimus, l. ii. p. 109, 110. If we had not fortunately poſſeſſed this ſatisfactory account of the diviſion of the power and provinces

CHAP. XVII.

After the Prætorian præfects had been diſmiſſed from all military command, the civil functions which they were ordained to exerciſe over ſo many ſubject nations, were adequate to the ambition and abilities of the moſt conſummate miniſters. To their wiſdom was committed the ſupreme adminiſtration of juſtice and of the finances, the two objects which, in a ſtate of peace, comprehend almoſt all the reſpective duties of the ſovereign and of the people; of the former, to protect the citizens who are obedient to the laws; of the latter, to contribute the ſhare of their property which is required for the expences of the ſtate. The coin, the highways, the poſts, the granaries, the manufactures, whatever could intereſt the public proſperity, was moderated by the authority of the Prætorian præfects. As the immediate repreſentatives of the Imperial majeſty, they were empowered to explain, to enforce, and on ſome occaſions to modify, the general edicts by their diſcretionary proclamations. They watched over the conduct of the provincial governors, removed the negligent, and inflicted puniſhments on the guilty. From all the inferior juriſdictions, an appeal in every matter of importance, either civil or criminal, might be brought before the tribunal of the præfect: but *his* ſentence was final and abſolute; and the emperors themſelves refuſed to admit any complaints againſt the judgment or the integrity of a magi-

vinces of the Prætorian præfects, we ſhould frequently have been perplexed amidſt the copious details of the Code, and the circumſtantial minuteneſs of the Notitia.

ſtrate

CHAP. XVII.

ſtrate whom they honoured with ſuch unbounded confidence [100]. His appointments were ſuitable to his dignity [101]; and if avarice was his ruling paſſion, he enjoyed frequent opportunities of collecting a rich harveſt of fees, of preſents, and of perquiſites. Though the emperors no longer dreaded the ambition of their præfects, they were attentive to counterbalance the power of this great office by the uncertainty and ſhortneſs of its duration [102].

The præfects of Rome and Conſtantinople.

From their ſuperior importance and dignity, Rome and Conſtantinople were alone excepted from the juriſdiction of the Prætorian præfects. The immenſe ſize of the city, and the experience of the tardy, ineffectual operation of the laws, had furniſhed the policy of Auguſtus with a ſpecious pretence for introducing a new magiſtrate, who alone could reſtrain a ſervile and turbulent popu-

[100] See a law of Conſtantine himſelf. A præfectis autem prætorio provocare, non ſinimus. Cod. Juſtinian. l. vii. tit. lxii. leg. 19. Chariſius, a lawyer of the time of Conſtantine (Heinec. Hiſt. Juris Romani, p. 349.), who admits this law as a fundamental principle of juriſprudence, compares the Prætorian præfects to the maſters of the horſe of the ancient dictators. Pandect. l. i. tit. xi.

[101] When Juſtinian, in the exhauſted condition of the empire, inſtituted a Prætorian præfect for Africa, he allowed him a ſalary of one hundred pounds of gold. Cod. Juſtinian. l. i. tit. xxvii. leg. 1.

[102] For this, and the other dignities of the empire, it may be ſufficient to refer to the ample commentaries of Pancirolus and Godefroy, who have diligently collected and accurately digeſted in their proper order all the legal and hiſtorical materials. From thoſe authors, Dr. Howell (Hiſtory of the World, vol. ii. p. 24—77.) had deduced a very diſtinct abridgment of the ſtate of the Roman empire.

CHAP. XV

lace by the ſtrong arm of arbitrary power[103]. Valerius Meſſalla was appointed the firſt præfect of Rome, that his reputation might countenance ſo invidious a meaſure: but, at the end of a few days, that accompliſhed citizen[104] reſigned his office, declaring with a ſpirit worthy of the friend of Brutus, that he found himſelf incapable of exerciſing a power incompatible with public freedom[105]. As the ſenſe of liberty became leſs exquiſite, the advantages of order were more clearly underſtood; and the præfect, who ſeemed to have been deſigned as a terror only to ſlaves and vagrants, was permitted to extend his civil and criminal juriſdiction over the equeſtrian and noble families of Rome. The prætors, annually created as the judges of law and equity, could not long diſpute the poſſeſſion of the Forum with a vigor-

[103] Tacit. Annal. vi. 11. Euſeb. in Chron. p. 155. Dion Caſſius, in the oration of Mæcenas (l. vii. p. 675.), deſcribes the prerogatives of the præfect of the city as they were eſtabliſhed in his own time.

[104] The fame of Meſſalla has been ſcarcely equal to his merit. In the earlieſt youth he was recommended by Cicero to the friendſhip of Brutus. He followed the ſtandard of the republic till it was broken in the fields of Philippi: he then accepted and deſerved the favour of the moſt moderate of the conquerors; and uniformly aſſerted his freedom and dignity in the court of Auguſtus. The triumph of Meſſalla was juſtified by the conqueſt of Aquitain. As an orator, he diſputed the palm of eloquence with Cicero himſelf. Meſſalla cultivated every muſe, and was the patron of every man of genius. He ſpent his evenings in philoſophic converſation with Horace; aſſumed his place at table between Delia and Tibullus; and amuſed his leiſure by encouraging the poetical talents of young Ovid.

[105] Incivilem eſſe poteſtatem conteſtans, ſays the tranſlator of Euſebius. Tacitus expreſſes the ſame idea in other words: quaſi neſcius exercendi.

ous

ous and permanent magiſtrate, who was uſually admitted into the confidence of the prince. Their courts were deſerted, their number, which had once fluctuated between twelve and eighteen [106], was gradually reduced to two or three, and their important functions were confined to the expenſive obligation [107] of exhibiting games for the amuſement of the people. After the office of the Roman conſuls had been changed into a vain pageant, which was rarely diſplayed in the capital, the præfects aſſumed their vacant place in the ſenate, and were ſoon acknowledged as the ordinary preſidents of that venerable aſſembly. They received appeals from the diſtance of one hundred miles; and it was allowed as a principle of juriſprudence, that all municipal authority was derived from them alone [108]. In the diſcharge of his laborious employment, the governor of Rome was aſſiſted by fifteen officers, ſome of whom had been originally his equals, or even his ſuperiors. The principal departments were relative to the command of a numerous watch eſtabliſhed as a

[106] See Lipſius, Excurſus D. ad 1 lib. Tacit. Annal.

[107] Heineccii Element. Juris Civilis ſecund. ordinem Pandect. tom. i. p. 70. See likewiſe Spanheim de Uſu Numiſmatum, tom. ii. diſſertat. x. p. 119. In the year 450, Marcian publiſhed a law, that *three* citizens ſhould be annually created Prætors of Conſtantinople by the choice of the ſenate, but with their own conſent. Cod. Juſtinian. l. i. tit. xxxix. leg. 2.

[108] Quidquid igitur intra urbem admittitur, ad P. U. videtur pertinere; ſed et ſiquid intra centeſimum milliarium. Ulpian in Pandect. l. i. tit. xiii. n. 1. He proceeds to enumerate the various offices of the præfect, who, in the code of Juſtinian (l. i. tit. xxxix. leg. 3.), is declared to precede and command all city magiſtrates, ſine injuriâ ac detrimento honoris alieni.

ſafeguard

CHAP. XVII.

ſafeguard againſt fires, robberies, and nocturnal diſorders; the cuſtody and diſtribution of the public allowance of corn and proviſions; the care of the port, of the aqueducts, of the common ſewers, and of the navigation and bed of the Tyber; the inſpection of the markets, the theatres, and of the private as well as public works. Their vigilance enſured the three principal objects of a regular police, ſafety, plenty, and cleanlineſs; and as a proof of the attention of government to preſerve the ſplendour and ornaments of the capital, a particular inſpector was appointed for the ſtatues; the guardian, as it were, of that inanimate people, which, according to the extravagant computation of an old writer, was ſcarcely inferior in number to the living inhabitants of Rome. About thirty years after the foundation of Conſtantinople, a ſimilar magiſtrate was created in that riſing metropolis, for the ſame uſes, and with the ſame powers. A perfect equality was eſtabliſhed between the dignity of the *two* municipal, and that of the *four* prætorian, præfects [109].

The proconſuls, vic.-præfects, &c.

Thoſe who, in the Imperial hierarchy, were diſtinguiſhed by the title of *Reſpectable*, formed an intermediate claſs between the *illuſtrious* præfects and the *honourable* magiſtrates of the provinces. In this claſs the proconſuls of Aſia, Achaia, and Africa, claimed a pre-eminence, which was yield-

[109] Beſides our uſual guides, we may obſerve, that Felix Cantelorius has written a ſeparate treatiſe, De Præfecto Urbis; and that many curious details concerning the police of Rome and Conſtantinople are contained in the fourteenth book of the Theodoſian Code.

ed

ed to the remembrance of their ancient dignity; and the appeal from their tribunal to that of the præfects was almoſt the only mark of their dependence [110]. But the civil government of the empire was diſtributed into thirteen great DIOCESES, each of which equalled the juſt meaſure of a powerful kingdom. The firſt of theſe dioceſes was ſubject to the juriſdiction of the *count* of the eaſt; and we may convey ſome idea of the importance and variety of his functions, by obſerving, that ſix hundred apparitors, who would be ſtyled at preſent either ſecretaries, or clerks, or uſhers, or meſſengers, were employed in his immediate office [111]. The place of *Auguſtal præfect* of Egypt was no longer filled by a Roman knight; but the name was retained; and the extraordinary powers which the ſituation of the country, and the temper of the inhabitants, had once made indiſpenſable, were ſtill continued to the governor. The eleven remaining dioceſes, of Aſiana, Pontica, and Thrace; of Macedonia, Dacia, and Pannonia or Weſtern Illyricum; of Italy and Africa; of Gaul, Spain, and Britain; were governed by twelve *vicars*, or *vice-præfects* [112], whoſe name

CHAP. XVII.

[110] Eunapius affirms, that the proconſul of Aſia was independent of the præfect; which muſt, however, be underſtood with ſome allowance: the juriſdiction of the vice-præfect he moſt aſſuredly diſclaimed. Pancirolus, p. 161.

[111] The proconſul of Africa had four hundred apparitors; and they all received large ſalaries, either from the treaſury or the province. See Pancirol. p. 26, and Cod. Juſtinian. l. xij. tit. lvi, lvii.

[112] In Italy there was likewiſe the *Vicar* of *Rome*. It has been much diſputed, whether his juriſdiction meaſured one hundred miles

CHAP. XVII.

name sufficiently explains the nature and dependence of their office. It may be added, that the lieutenant-generals of the Roman armies, the military counts and dukes, who will be hereafter mentioned, were allowed the rank and title of *Respectable.*

The governors of the provinces.

As the spirit of jealousy and ostentation prevailed in the councils of the emperors, they proceeded with anxious diligence to divide the substance, and to multiply the titles of power. The vast countries which the Roman conquerors had united under the same simple form of administration, were imperceptibly crumbled into minute fragments; till at length the whole empire was distributed into one hundred and sixteen provinces, each of which supported an expensive and splendid establishment. Of these, three were governed by *proconsuls*, thirty-seven by *consulars*, five by *correctors*, and seventy-one by *presidents*. The appellations of these magistrates were different; they ranked in successive order, the ensigns of their dignity were curiously varied, and their situation, from accidental circumstances, might be more or less agreeable or advantageous. But they were all (excepting only the proconsuls) alike included in the class of *honourable* persons; and they were alike entrusted, during the pleasure of the prince, and under the authority of the præfects or their deputies, with the administration of justice and the finances in their respective districts. The ponderous volumes of the Codes and

from the city, or whether it stretched over the ten southern provinces of Italy.

Pandects

CHAP. XVII.

Pandects [113] would furniſh ample materials for a minute enquiry into the ſyſtem of provincial government, as in the ſpace of ſix centuries it was improved by the wiſdom of the Roman ſtateſmen and lawyers. It may be ſufficient for the hiſtorian to ſelect two ſingular and ſalutary proviſions intended to reſtrain the abuſe of authority. 1. For the preſervation of peace and order, the governors of the provinces were armed with the ſword of juſtice. They inflicted corporal puniſhments, and they exerciſed, in capital offences, the power of life and death. But they were not authoriſed to indulge the condemned criminal with the choice of his own execution, or to pronounce a ſentence of the mildeſt and moſt honourable kind of exile. Theſe prerogatives were reſerved to the præfects, who alone could impoſe the heavy fine of fifty pounds of gold: their vicegerents were confined to the trifling weight of a few ounces [114]. This diſtinction, which ſeems to grant the larger, while it denies the ſmaller degree of authority, was founded on a very rational motive. The ſmaller degree was infinitely more liable to abuſe. The paſſions of a provincial magiſtrate might frequently provoke him into acts of oppreſſion,

[113] Among the works of the celebrated Ulpian, there was one in ten books, concerning the office of a proconſul, whoſe duties in the moſt eſſential articles were the ſame as thoſe of an ordinary governor of a province.

[114] The preſidents, or conſulars, could impoſe only two ounces; the vice-præfects, three; the proconſuls, count of the eaſt, and præfect of Ægypt, ſix. See Heineccii Jur. Civil. tom. i. p. 75. Pandect. l. xlviii. tit. xix. n. 8. Cod. Juſtinian. l. i. tit. liv. leg. 4. 6.

CHAP. XVII.

which affected only the freedom or the fortunes of the ſubject; though, from a principle of prudence, perhaps of humanity, he might ſtill be terrified by the guilt of innocent blood. It may likewiſe be conſidered, that exile, conſiderable fines, or the choice of an eaſy death, relate more particularly to the rich and the noble; and the perſons the moſt expoſed to the avarice or reſentment of a provincial magiſtrate, were thus removed from his obſcure perſecution to the more auguſt and impartial tribunal of the Prætorian præfect. 2. As it was reaſonably apprehended that the integrity of the judge might be biaſſed, if his intereſt was concerned, or his affections were engaged; the ſtricteſt regulations were eſtabliſhed to exclude any perſon, without the ſpecial diſpenſation of the emperor, from the government of the province where he was born [115]; and to prohibit the governor or his ſon from contracting marriage with a native or an inhabitant [116]; or from purchaſing ſlaves, lands, or houſes, within the extent of his juriſdiction [117]. Notwithſtanding

[115] Ut nulli patriæ ſuæ adminiſtratio ſine ſpeciali principis permiſſu permittatur. Cod. Juſtinian. l. i. tit. xli. This law was firſt enacted by the emperor Marcus, after the rebellion of Caſſius (Dion. l. lxxi.) The ſame regulation is obſerved in China, with equal ſtrictneſs, and with equal effect.

[116] Pandect l. xxiii. tit. ii. n. 38. 57. 63.

[117] In jure continetur, ne quis in adminiſtratione conſtitutus aliquid compararet. Cod. Theod. l. viii. tit. xv. leg. 1. This maxim of common law was enforced by a ſeries of edicts (ſee the remainder of the title) from Conſtantine to Juſtin. From this prohibition, which is extended to the meaneſt offices of the governor, they except only clothes and proviſions. The purchaſe within five years may be recovered; after which, on information, it devolves to the treaſury.

theſe

CHAP. XVII

these rigorous precautions, the emperor Constantine, after a reign of twenty-five years, still deplores the venal and oppressive administration of justice, and expresses the warmest indignation that the audience of the judge, his dispatch of business, his seasonable delays, and his final sentence, were publicly sold, either by himself or by the officers of his court. The continuance, and perhaps the impunity, of these crimes, is attested by the repetition of impotent laws, and ineffectual menaces [118].

The profession of the law.

All the civil magistrates were drawn from the profession of the law. The celebrated Institutes of Justinian are addressed to the youth of his dominions, who had devoted themselves to the study of Roman jurisprudence; and the sovereign condescends to animate their diligence, by the assurance that their skill and ability would in time be rewarded by an adequate share in the government of the republic [119]. The rudiments of this lucrative science were taught in all the considerable cities of the east and west; but the most famous school was that of Berytus [120], on the coast of

[118] Cessent rapaces jam nunc officialium manus; cessent, inquam; nam si moniti non cessaverint, gladiis præcidentur, &c. Cod. Theod. l. i. tit. vii. leg. 1. Zeno enacted, that all governors should remain in the province, to answer any accusations, fifty days after the expiration of their power. Cod. Justinian. l. ii. tit. xlix. leg. 1.

[119] Summâ igitur ope, et alacri studio has leges nostras accipite; et vosmetipsos sic eruditos ostendite, ut spes vos pulcherrima foveat; toto legitimo opere perfecto, posse etiam nostram rempublicam in partibus ejus vobis credendis gubernari. Justinian. in proem. Institutionum.

[120] The splendor of the school of Berytus, which preserved in the east the language and jurisprudence of the Romans, may be com-

CHAP. XVII.

of Phœnicia; which flouriſhed above three centuries from the time of Alexander Severus, the author perhaps of an inſtitution ſo advantageous to his native country. After a regular courſe of education, which laſted five years, the ſtudents diſperſed themſelves through the provinces, in ſearch of fortune and honours; nor could they want an inexhauſtible ſupply of buſineſs in a great empire, already corrupted by the multiplicity of laws, of arts, and of vices. The court of the Prætorian præfect of the eaſt could alone furniſh employment for one hundred and fifty advocates, ſixty-four of whom were diſtinguiſhed by peculiar privileges, and two were annually choſen with a ſalary of ſixty pounds of gold, to defend the cauſes of the treaſury. The firſt experiment was made of their judicial talents, by appointing them to act occaſionally as aſſeſſors to the magiſtrates; from thence they were often raiſed to preſide in the tribunals before which they had pleaded. They obtained the government of a province; and, by the aid of merit, of reputation, or of favour, they aſcended, by ſucceſſive ſteps, to the *illuſtrious* dignities of the ſtate [121]. In the practice of

puted to have laſted from the third to the middle of the ſixth century. Heinecc. Jur. Rom. Hiſt. p. 351—356.

[121] As in a former period I have traced the civil and military promotion of Pertinax, I ſhall here inſert the civil honours of Mallius Theodorus. 1. He was diſtinguiſhed by his eloquence, while he pleaded as an advocate in the court of the Prætorian præfect. 2. He governed one of the provinces of Africa, either as preſident or conſular, and deſerved, by his adminiſtration, the honour of a braſs ſtatute. 3. He was appointed vicar, or vice-præfect of Macedonia. 4. Quæſtor. 5. Count of the ſacred largeſſes. 6. Prætorian præfect of

CHAP XVII.

of the bar, theſe men had conſidered reaſon as the inſtrument of diſpute; they interpreted the laws according to the dictates of private intereſt; and the ſame pernicious habits might ſtill adhere to their characters in the public adminiſtration of the ſtate. The honour of a liberal profeſſion has indeed been vindicated by ancient and modern advocates, who have filled the moſt important ſtations, with pure integrity, and conſummate wiſdom: but in the decline of Roman juriſprudence, the ordinary promotion of lawyers was pregnant with miſchief and diſgrace. The noble art, which had once been preſerved as the ſacred inheritance of the patricians, was fallen into the hands of freedmen and plebeians[122], who, with cunning rather than with ſkill, exerciſed a ſordid and pernicious trade. Some of them procured admittance into families for the purpoſe of fomenting differences, of encouraging ſuits, and of preparing a harveſt of gain for themſelves or their bre-

of the Gauls; whilſt he might yet be repreſented as a young man. 7. After a retreat, perhaps a diſgrace of many years, which Mallius (confounded by ſome critics with the poet Manilius, ſee Fabricius Bibliothec. Latin. Edit. Erneſt. tom. i. c. 18. p. 501.) employed in the ſtudy of the Grecian philoſophy, he was named Prætorian præfect of Italy, in the year 397. 8. While he ſtill exerciſed that great office, he was created, in the year 399, conſul for the Weſt; and his name, on account of the infamy of his colleague, the eunuch Eutropius, often ſtands alone in the Faſti. 9. In the year 408, Mallius was appointed a ſecond time Prætorian præfect of Italy. Even in the venal panegyric of Claudian, we may diſcover the merit of Mallius Theodorus, who, by a rare felicity, was the intimate friend both of Symmachus and of St. Auguſtin. See Tillemont, Hiſt. des Emp. tom. v. p. 1110—1114.

[122] Mamertinus in Panegyr. vet. xi. 20. Auſterius apud Photium, p. 1509.

CHAP. XVII.

thren. Others, recluſe in their chambers, maintained the dignity of legal profeſſors, by furniſhing a rich client with ſubtleties to confound the plaineſt truth, and with arguments to colour the moſt unjuſtifiable pretenſions. The ſplendid and popular claſs was compoſed of the advocates, who filled the Forum with the ſound of their turgid and loquacious rhetoric. Careleſs of fame and of juſtice, they are deſcribed, for the moſt part, as ignorant and rapacious guides, who conducted their clients through a maze of expence, of delay, and of diſappointment; from whence, after a tedious ſeries of years, they were at length diſmiſſed, when their patience and fortune were almoſt exhauſted [123].

The military officers.

III. In the ſyſtem of policy introduced by Auguſtus, the governors, thoſe at leaſt of the imperial provinces, were inveſted with the full powers of the ſovereign himſelf. Miniſters of peace and war, the diſtribution of rewards and puniſhments depended on them alone, and they ſucceſſively appeared on their tribunal in the robes of civil magiſtracy, and in complete armour at the head of the Roman legions [124]. The influence of the

[123] The curious paſſage of Ammianus (l. xxx. c. 4.), in which he paints the manners of contemporary lawyers, affords a ſtrange mixture of ſound ſenſe, falſe rhetoric, and extravagant ſatire. Godefroy (Prolegom. ad Cod. Theod. c. i. p. 185.) ſupports the hiſtorian by ſimilar complaints, and authentic facts. In the fourth century, many camels might have been laden with law-books. Eunapius in Vet. Edeſii, p. 72.

[124] See a very ſplendid example in the Life of Agricola, particularly c. 20, 21. The lieutenant of Britain was entruſted with the ſame powers which Cicero, proconſul of Cilicia, had exerciſed in the name of the ſenate and people.

revenue,

CHAP. XVII.

revenue, the authority of law, and the command of a military force, concurred to render their power ſupreme and abſolute; and whenever they were tempted to violate their allegiance, the loyal province which they involved in their rebellion, was ſcarcely ſenſible of any change in its political ſtate. From the time of Commodus to the reign of Conſtantine, near one hundred governors might be enumerated, who, with various ſucceſs, erected the ſtandard of revolt; and though the innocent were too often ſacrificed, the guilty might be ſometimes prevented, by the ſuſpicious cruelty of their maſter[125]. To ſecure his throne and the public tranquillity from theſe formidable ſervants, Conſtantine reſolved to divide the military from the civil adminiſtration; and to eſtabliſh, as a permanent and profeſſional diſtinction, a practice which had been adopted only as an occaſional expedient. The ſupreme juriſdiction exerciſed by the Prætorian præfects over the armies of the empire, was transferred to the two *maſters general* whom he inſtituted, the one for the *cavalry*, the other for the *infantry*; and though each of theſe *illuſtrious* officers was more peculiarly reſponſible for the diſcipline of thoſe troops which were under his immediate inſpection, they both indifferently commanded in the field the ſeveral bodies, whether of horſe or foot, which were united in the

[125] The Abbé Dubos, who has examined with accuracy (ſee Hiſt. de la Monarchie Françoiſe, tom. i. p. 41—100. edit. 1742.) the inſtitutions of Auguſtus and of Conſtantine, obſerves, that if Otho had been put to death the day before he executed his conſpiracy, Otho would now appear in hiſtory as innocent as Corbulo.

ſame

CHAP. XVII.

ſame army [126]. Their number was ſoon doubled by the diviſion of the eaſt and weſt; and as ſeparate generals of the ſame rank and title were appointed on the four important frontiers of the Rhine, of the Upper and the Lower Danube, and of the Euphrates, the defence of the Roman empire was at length committed to eight maſters general of the cavalry and infantry. Under their orders, thirty-five military commanders were ſtationed in the provinces: three in Britain, ſix in Gaul, one in Spain, one in Italy, five on the Upper, and four on the Lower Danube; in Aſia eight, three in Egypt, and four in Africa. The titles of *counts*, and *dukes* [127], by which they were properly diſtinguiſhed, have obtained in modern languages ſo very different a ſenſe, that the uſe of them may occaſion ſome ſurpriſe. But it ſhould be recollected, that the ſecond of thoſe appellations is only a corruption of the Latin word, which was indiſcriminately applied to any military chief. All theſe provincial generals were therefore *dukes*; but no more than ten among them were dignified with the rank of *counts* or companions, a title of honour, or rather of favour, which had been recently invented in the

[126] Zoſimus, l. ii. p. 110. Before the end of the reign of Conſtantius, the *magiſtri militum* were already increaſed to four. See Valeſius ad Ammian. l. xvi. c. 7.

[127] Though the military counts and dukes are frequently mentioned, both in hiſtory and the codes, we muſt have recourſe to the Notitia for the exact knowledge of their number and ſtations. For the inſtitution, rank, privileges, &c. of the counts in general, ſee Cod. Theod. l. vi. tit. xii—xx. with the Commentary of Godefroy.

court of Conſtantine. A gold belt was the enſign which diſtinguiſhed the office of the counts and dukes; and beſides their pay, they received a liberal allowance ſufficient to maintain one hundred and ninety ſervants, and one hundred and fifty-eight horſes. They were ſtrictly prohibited from interfering in any matter which related to the adminiſtration of juſtice or the revenue; but the command which they exerciſed over the troops of their department, was independent of the authority of the magiſtrates. About the ſame time that Conſtantine gave a legal ſanction to the eccleſiaſtical order, he inſtituted in the Roman empire the nice balance of the civil and the military powers. The emulation, and ſometimes the diſcord, which reigned between two profeſſions of oppoſite intereſts and incompatible manners, was productive of beneficial and of pernicious conſequences. It was ſeldom to be expected that the general and the civil governor of a province ſhould either conſpire for the diſturbance, or ſhould unite for the ſervice of their country. While the one delayed to offer the aſſiſtance which the other diſdained to ſolicit, the troops very frequently remained without orders or without ſupplies; the public ſafety was betrayed, and the defenceleſs ſubjects were left expoſed to the fury of the Barbarians. The divided adminiſtration, which had been formed by Conſtantine, relaxed the vigour of the ſtate, while it ſecured the tranquillity of the monarch.

CHAP. XVII.

The memory of Conſtantine has been deſervedly cenſured for another innovation which corrupted

Diſtinction of the troops.

CHAP. XVII.

rupted military discipline, and prepared the ruin of the empire. The nineteen years which preceded his final victory over Licinius, had been a period of license and intestine war. The rivals who contended for the possession of the Roman world, had withdrawn the greatest part of their forces from the guard of the general frontier; and the principal cities which formed the boundary of their respective dominions were filled with soldiers, who considered their countrymen as their most implacable enemies. After the use of these internal garrisons had ceased with the civil war, the conqueror wanted either wisdom or firmness to revive the severe discipline of Diocletian, and to suppress a fatal indulgence, which habit had endeared and almost confirmed to the military order. From the reign of Constantine a popular and even legal distinction was admitted between the *Palatines*[128] and the *Borderers*; the troops of the court as they were improperly stiled, and the troops of the frontier. The former, elevated by the superiority of their pay and privileges, were permitted, except in the extraordinary emergencies of war, to occupy their tranquil stations in the heart of the provinces. The most flourishing cities were oppressed by the intolerable weight of quarters. The soldiers insensibly forgot the virtues of their profession, and contracted only the

[128] Zosimus, l. ii. p. 111. The distinction between the two classes of Roman troops is very darkly expressed in the historians, the laws, and the Notitia. Consult, however, the copious *paratitlon* or abstract, which Godefroy has drawn up of the seventh book, de Re Militari, of the Theodosian Code, l. vii. tit i. leg. 18. L. viii. tit. i. leg. 10.

vices,

CHAP. XVII.

vices of civil life. They were either degraded by the induſtry of mechanic trades, or enervated by the luxury of baths and theatres. They ſoon became careleſs of their martial exerciſes, curious in their diet and apparel; and while they inſpired terror to the ſubjects of the empire, they trembled at the hoſtile approach of the Barbarians [129]. The chain of fortifications which Diocletian and his colleagues had extended along the banks of the great rivers, was no longer maintained with the ſame care, or defended with the ſame vigilance. The numbers which ſtill remained under the name of the troops of the frontier, might be ſufficient for the ordinary defence. But their ſpirit was degraded by the humiliating reflection, that *they* who were expoſed to the hardſhips and dangers of a perpetual warfare, were rewarded only with about two-thirds of the pay and emoluments which were laviſhed on the troops of the court. Even the bands or legions that were raiſed the neareſt to the level of thoſe unworthy favourites, were in ſome meaſure diſgraced by the title of honour which they were allowed to aſſume. It was in vain that Conſtantine repeated the moſt dreadful menaces of fire and ſword againſt the Borderers who ſhould dare to deſert their colours, to connive at the inroads of the Barbarians, or to

[129] Ferox erat in ſuos miles et rapax, ignavus vero in hoſtes et fractus. Ammian. l. xxii. c. 4. He obſerves that they loved downy beds and houſes of marble; and that their cups were heavier than their ſwords.

participate

CHAP. XVII.

participate in the ſpoil [130]. The miſchiefs which flow from injudicious counſels are ſeldom removed by the application of partial ſeverities: and though ſucceeding princes laboured to reſtore the ſtrength and numbers of the frontier garriſons, the empire, till the laſt moment of its diſſolution, continued to languiſh under the mortal wound which had been ſo raſhly or ſo weakly inflicted by the hand of Conſtantine.

Reduction of the legions.

The ſame timid policy, of dividing whatever is united, of reducing whatever is eminent, of dreading every active power, and of expecting that the moſt feeble will prove the moſt obedient, ſeems to pervade the inſtitutions of ſeveral princes, and particularly thoſe of Conſtantine. The martial pride of the legions, whoſe victorious camps had ſo often been the ſcene of rebellion, was nouriſhed by the memory of their paſt exploits, and the conſciouſneſs of their actual ſtrength. As long as they maintained their ancient eſtabliſhment of ſix thouſand men, they ſubſiſted, under the reign of Diocletian, each of them ſingly, a viſible and important object in the military hiſtory of the Roman empire. A few years afterwards, theſe gigantic bodies were ſhrunk to a very diminutive ſize; and when *ſeven* legions, with ſome auxiliaries, defended the city of Amida againſt the Perſians, the total garriſon, with the

[130] Cod. Theod. l. vii. tit. i. leg. 1. tit. xii. leg. 1. See Howell's Hiſt. of the World, vol. ii. p. 19. That learned hiſtorian, who is not ſufficiently known, labours to juſtify the character and policy of Conſtantine.

inha-

CHAP. XVII.

inhabitants of both ſexes, and the peaſants of the deſerted country, did not exceed the number of twenty thouſand perſons [131]. From this fact, and from ſimilar examples, there is reaſon to believe, that the conſtitution of the legionary troops, to which they partly owed their valour and diſcipline, was diſſolved by Conſtantine; and that the bands of Roman infantry, which ſtill aſſumed the ſame names and the ſame honours, conſiſted only of one thouſand or fifteen hundred men [132]. The conſpiracy of ſo many ſeparate detachments, each of which was awed by the ſenſe of its own weakneſs, could eaſily be checked; and the ſucceſſors of Conſtantine might indulge their love of oſtentation, by iſſuing their orders to one hundred and thirty-two legions, inſcribed on the muſter-roll of their numerous armies. The remainder of their troops was diſtributed into ſeveral hundred cohorts of infantry, and ſquadrons of cavalry. Their arms, and titles, and enſigns, were calculated to inſpire terror, and to diſplay the variety of nations who marched under the imperial ſtandard. And not a veſtige was left of that ſevere ſimplicity, which, in the ages of freedom and victory, had diſtinguiſhed the line of battle of a Roman army from the confuſed hoſt of an Aſiatic monarch [133]. A more particular enumeration, drawn

[131] Ammian. l. xix. c. 2. He obſerves (c. 5.) that the deſperate ſallies of two Gallic legions were like an handful of water thrown on a great conflagration.

[132] Pancirolus ad Notitiam, p. 96. Memoires de l'Academie des Inſcriptions, tom. xxv. p. 491.

[133] Romana acies unius prope formæ erat et hominum et armorum genere.—Regia acies varia magis multis gentibus diſſimilitudine armorum

CHAP. XVII.

drawn from the *Notitia*, might exercise the diligence of an antiquary; but the historian will content himself with observing, that the number of permanent stations or garrisons established on the frontiers of the empire, amounted to five hundred and eighty-three; and that, under the successors of Constantine, the complete force of the military establishment was computed at six hundred and forty-five thousand soldiers[124]. An effort so prodigious surpassed the wants of a more ancient, and the faculties of a later, period.

Difficulty of levies.

In the various states of society, armies are recruited from very different motives. Barbarians are urged by the love of war; the citizens of a free republic may be prompted by a principle of duty; the subjects, or at least the nobles of a monarchy, are animated by a sentiment of honour; but the timid and luxurious inhabitants of a declining empire must be allured into the service by the hopes of profit, or compelled by the dread of punishment. The resources of the Roman treasury were exhausted by the increase of pay, by the repetition of donatives, and by the invention of new emoluments and indulgences, which, in the opinion of the provincial youth, might compensate the hardships and dangers of a military life. Yet, although the stature was lower-

armorum auxiliorumque erat. T. Liv. l. xxxvii. c. 39, 40. Flaminius, even before the event, had compared the army of Antiochus to a supper, in which the flesh of one vile animal was diversified by the skill of the cooks. See the life of Flaminius in Plutarch.

124 Agathias, l. v. p. 157. edit. Louvre.

ed [135], although ſlaves, at leaſt by a tacit connivance, were indiſcriminately received into the ranks, the inſurmountable difficulty of procuring a regular and adequate ſupply of volunteers, obliged the emperors to adopt more effectual and coërcive methods. The lands beſtowed on the veterans, as the free reward of their valour, were henceforward granted under a condition, which contains the firſt rudiments of the feudal tenures; that their ſons, who ſucceeded to the inheritance, ſhould devote themſelves to the profeſſion of arms, as ſoon as they attained the age of manhood; and their cowardly refuſal was puniſhed by the loſs of honour, of fortune, or even of life [136]. But as the annual growth of the ſons of the veterans bore a very ſmall proportion to the demands of the ſervice, levies of men were frequently required from the provinces, and every proprietor was obliged either to take up arms, or to procure a ſubſtitute, or to purchaſe his exemption by the payment of a heavy fine. The ſum of forty-two pieces of gold, to which it was *reduced*, aſcertains the exorbitant price of volunteers, and the reluc-

CHAP. XVII.

[135] Valentinian (Cod. Theodoſ. l. vii. tit. xiii. leg. 3.) fixes the ſtandard at five feet ſeven inches, about five feet four inches and a half Engliſh meaſure. It had formerly been five feet ten inches, and in the beſt corps ſix Roman feet. Sed tunc erat amplior multitudo, & plures ſequebantur militiam armatam. Vegetius de Re Militari, l. i. c. 5.

[136] See the two titles, De Veteranis, and De Filiis Veteranorum, in the ſeventh book of the Theodoſian Code. The age at which their military ſervice was required, varied from twenty-five to ſixteen. If the ſons of the veterans appeared with a horſe, they had a right to ſerve in the cavalry; two horſes gave them ſome valuable privileges.

CHAP. XVII.

tance with which the government admitted of this alternative [137]. Such was the horror for the profeſſion of a ſoldier, which had affected the minds of the degenerate Romans, that many of the youth of Italy, and the provinces, choſe to cut off the fingers of their right hand to eſcape from being preſſed into the ſervice; and this ſtrange expedient was ſo commonly practiſed, as to deſerve the ſevere animadverſion of the laws [138], and a peculiar name in the Latin language [139].

Encreaſe of Barbarian auxiliaries.

The introduction of Barbarians into the Roman armies became every day more univerſal, more neceſſary, and more fatal. The moſt daring of the Scythians, of the Goths, and of the Germans, who delighted in war, and who found it more

[137] Cod. Theod. l. vii. tit. xiii. leg. 7. According to the hiſtorian Socrates (See Godefroy ad loc.), the ſame emperor Valens ſometimes required eighty pieces of gold for a recruit. In the following law it is faintly expreſſed, that ſlaves ſhall not be admitted inter optimas lectiſſimorum militum turmas.

[138] The perſon and property of a Roman knight, who had mutilated his two ſons, were ſold at public auction by order of Auguſtus. (Sueton. in Auguſt. c. 27.) The moderation of that artful uſurper proves, that this example of ſeverity was juſtified by the ſpirit of the times. Ammianus makes a diſtinction between the effeminate Italians and the hardy Gauls. (L. xv. c. 12.) Yet only fifteen years afterwards, Valentinian, in a law addreſſed to the præfect of Gaul, is obliged to enact that theſe cowardly deſerters ſhall be burnt alive. (Cod. Theod. l. vii. tit. xiii. leg. 5.) Their numbers in Illyricum were ſo conſiderable, that the province complained of a ſcarcity of recruits. (Id. leg. 10.)

[139] They were called *Murci*. *Murcidus* is found in Plautus and Feſtus, to denote a lazy and cowardly perſon, who, according to Arnobius and Auguſtin, was under the immediate protection of the goddeſs *Murcia*. From this particular inſtance of cowardice, *murcare* is uſed as ſynonimous to *mutilare*, by the writers of the middle Latinity. See Lindenbrogius, and Valeſius ad Ammian. Marcellin. l. xv. c. 12.

profitable

CHAP. XVII.

profitable to defend than to ravage the provinces, were enrolled, not only in the auxiliaries of their respective nations, but in the legions themselves, and among the most distinguished of the Palatine troops. As they freely mingled with the subjects of the empire, they gradually learned to despise their manners, and to imitate their arts. They abjured the implicit reverence which the pride of Rome had exacted from their ignorance, while they acquired the knowledge and possession of those advantages by which alone she supported her declining greatness. The Barbarian soldiers, who displayed any military talents, were advanced, without exception, to the most important commands; and the names of the tribunes, of the counts and dukes, and of the generals themselves, betray a foreign origin, which they no longer condescended to disguise. They were often entrusted with the conduct of a war against their countrymen; and though most of them preferred the ties of allegiance to those of blood, they did not always avoid the guilt, or at least the suspicion, of holding a treasonable correspondence with the enemy, of inviting his invasion, or of sparing his retreat. The camps, and the palace of the son of Constantine, were governed by the powerful faction of the Franks, who preserved the strictest connection with each other, and with their country, and who resented every personal affront as a national indignity [140].

[140] Malarichus—adhibitis Francis quorum ea tempestate in palatio multitudo florebat, erectius jam loquebatur tumultuabaturque. Ammian. l. xv. c. 5.

CHAP. XVII.

When the tyrant Caligula was ſuſpected of an intention to inveſt a very extraordinary candidate with the conſular robes, the ſacrilegious profanation would have ſcarcely excited leſs aſtoniſhment, if, inſtead of a horſe, the nobleſt chieftain of Germany or Britain had been the object of his choice. The revolution of three centuries had produced ſo remarkable a change in the prejudices of the people, that, with the public approbation, Conſtantine ſhewed his ſucceſſors the example of beſtowing the honours of the conſulſhip on the barbarians, who, by their merit and ſervices, had deſerved to be ranked among the firſt of the Romans [141]. But as theſe hardy veterans, who had been educated in the ignorance or contempt of the laws, were incapable of exerciſing any civil offices, the powers of the human mind were contracted by the irreconcileable ſeparation of talents as well as of profeſſions. The accompliſhed citizens of the Greek and Roman republics, whoſe characters could adapt themſelves to the bar, the ſenate, the camp, or the ſchools, had learned to write, to ſpeak, and to act with the ſame ſpirit, and with equal abilities.

Seven miniſters of the palace.

IV. Beſides the magiſtrates and generals, who at a diſtance from the court diffuſed their dele-

[141] Barbaros omnium primus, ad uſque faſces auxerat et trabeas conſulares. Ammian. l. xx. c. 10. Euſebius (in Vit. Conſtantin. l. iv. c. 7.) and Aurelius Victor ſeem to confirm the truth of this aſſertion; yet in the thirty two conſular Faſti of the reign of Conſtantine, I cannot diſcover the name of a ſingle Barbarian. I ſhould therefore interpret the liberality of that prince, as relative to the ornaments, rather than to the office, of the conſulſhip.

gated

CHAP. XVII.

gated authority over the provinces and armies, the emperor conferred the rank of *Illuſtrious* on ſeven of his more immediate ſervants, to whoſe fidelity he entruſted his ſafety, or his counſels, or his treaſures. 1. The private apartments of the palace were governed by a favourite eunuch, who, in the language of that age, was ſtyled the *præpoſitus* or præfect of the ſacred bed-chamber. His duty was to attend the emperor in his hours of ſtate, or in thoſe of amuſement, and to perform about his perſon all thoſe menial ſervices, which can only derive their ſplendor from the influence of royalty. Under a prince who deſerved to reign, the great chamberlain (for ſuch we may call him) was an uſeful and humble domeſtic; but an artful domeſtic, who improves every occaſion of unguarded confidence, will inſenſibly acquire over a feeble mind that aſcendant which harſh wiſdom and uncomplying virtue can ſeldom obtain. The degenerate grandſons of Theodoſius, who were inviſible to their ſubjects, and contemptible to their enemies, exalted the præfects of their bed-chamber above the heads of all the miniſters of the palace [44]; and even his deputy, the firſt of the ſplendid train of ſlaves who waited in the preſence, was thought worthy to rank before the *reſpectable* proconſuls of Greece or Aſia. The juriſdiction of the chamberlain was acknowledged by the *counts*, or ſuperintendants, who regulated the two important provinces, of the magnificence of the wardrobe, and of the luxury of the

The chamberlain.

[44] Cod. Theod. l. vi. tit. 8.

CHAP. XVII.

Imperial table[143]. 2. The principal adminiſtration of public affairs was committed to the diligence and abilities of the *maſter of the offices*[144]. He was the ſupreme magiſtrate of the palace, inſpected the diſcipline of the civil and military *ſchools*, and received appeals from all parts of the empire; in the cauſes which related to that numerous army of privileged perſons, who, as the ſervants of the court, had obtained, for themſelves and families, a right to decline the authority of the ordinary judges. The correſpondence between the prince and his ſubjects was managed by the four *ſcrinia*, or offices of this miniſter of ſtate. The firſt was appropriated to memorials, the ſecond to epiſtles, the third to petitions, and the fourth to papers and orders of a miſcellaneous kind. Each of theſe was directed by an inferior *maſter* of *reſpectable* dignity, and the whole buſineſs was diſpatched by an hundred and forty-eight ſecretaries, choſen for the moſt part from the profeſſion of the law, on account of the variety of abſtracts of reports and references which frequently

The maſter of the offices.

[143] By a very ſingular metaphor, borrowed from the military character of the firſt emperors, the ſteward of their houſehold was ſtyled the count of their camp (comes caſtrenſis). Caſſiodorius very ſeriouſly repreſents to him, that his own fame, and that of the empire, muſt depend on the opinion which foreign ambaſſadors may conceive of the plenty and magnificence of the royal table. (Variar. l. vi. epiſtol. 9.)

[144] Gutherius (de Officiis Domûs Auguſtæ, l. ii. c. 20. l. iii.) has very accurately explained the functions of the maſter of the offices, and the conſtitution of his ſubordinate *ſcrinia*. But he vainly attempts, on the moſt doubtful authority, to deduce from the time of the Antonines, or even of Nero, the origin of a magiſtrate who cannot be found in hiſtory before the reign of Conſtantine.

CHAP. XVII.

quently occurred in the exercise of their several functions. From a condescension which in former ages would have been esteemed unworthy of the Roman majesty, a particular secretary was allowed for the Greek language; and interpreters were appointed to receive the ambassadors of the Barbarians: but the department of foreign affairs, which constitutes so essential a part of modern policy, seldom diverted the attention of the master of the offices. His mind was more seriously engaged by the general direction of the posts and arsenals of the empire. There were thirty-four cities, fifteen in the east, and nineteen in the west, in which regular companies of workmen were perpetually employed in fabricating defensive armour, offensive weapons of all sorts, and military engines, which were deposited in the arsenals, and occasionally delivered for the service of the troops.

3. In the course of nine centuries, the office of *quæstor* had experienced a very singular revolution. In the infancy of Rome, two inferior magistrates were annually elected by the people, to relieve the consuls from the invidious management of the public treasure [145]; a similar assistant was granted to every proconsul, and to every prætor, who exercised a military or provincial command; with the extent of conquest, the two quæstors were gradually multiplied to the number of four,

The quæstor.

[145] Tacitus (Annal. xi. 22.) says, that the first quæstors were elected by the people, sixty-four years after the foundation of the republic; but he is of opinion, that they had, long before that period, been annually appointed by the consuls, and even by the kings. But this obscure point of antiquity is contested by other writers.

CHAP. XVII.

of eight, of twenty, and, for a ſhort time, perhaps, of forty [146]; and the nobleſt citizens ambitiouſly ſolicited an office which gave them a ſeat in the ſenate, and a juſt hope of obtaining the honours of the republic. Whilſt Auguſtus affected to maintain the freedom of election, he conſented to accept the annual privilege of recommending, or rather indeed of nominating, a certain proportion of candidates; and it was his cuſtom to ſelect one of theſe diſtinguiſhed youths, to read his orations or epiſtles in the aſſemblies of the ſenate [147]. The practice of Auguſtus was imitated by ſucceeding princes; the occaſional commiſſion was eſtabliſhed as a permanent office; and the favoured quæſtor, aſſuming a new and more illuſtrious character, alone ſurvived the ſuppreſſion of his ancient and uſeleſs colleagues [148]. As the orations,

[146] Tacitus (Annal. xi. 22.) ſeems to conſider twenty as the higheſt number of quæſtors; and Dion. (l. xliii. p. 374.) inſinuates that if the dictator Cæſar once created forty, it was only to facilitate the payment of an immenſe debt of gratitude. Yet the augmentation which he made of prætors ſubſiſted under the ſucceeding reigns.

[147] Sueton. in Auguſt. c. 65, and Torrent. ad loc. Dion. Caſ. p. 755.

[148] The youth and inexperience of the quæſtors, who entered on that important office in their twenty-fifth year (Lipſ. Excurſ. ad Tacit. l. iii. D.), engaged Auguſtus to remove them from the management of the treaſury; and though they were reſtored by Claudius, they ſeem to have been finally diſmiſſed by Nero. (Tacit. Annal. xxii. 29. Sueton. in Aug. c. 36. in Claud. c. 24. Dion. p. 696. 961, &c. Plin. Epiſtol. x. 20. & alibi.) In the provinces of the Imperial diviſion, the place of the quæſtors was more ably ſupplied by the *procurators* (Dion. Caſ. p. 707. Tacit. in Vit. Agricol. c. 15.); or, as they were afterwards called, *rationales*. (Hiſt. Auguſt. p. 130.). But in the provinces of the ſenate we may ſtill diſcover a ſeries of quæſtors till the reign of Marcus Antoninus. (See the Inſcriptions

tions, which he compoſed in the name of the emperor [149], acquired the force, and, at length, the form of abſolute edicts, he was conſidered as the repreſentative of the legiſlative power, the oracle of the council, and the original ſource of the civil juriſprudence. He was ſometimes invited to take his ſeat in the ſupreme judicature of the Imperial conſiſtory, with the Prætorian præfects, and the maſter of the offices; and he was frequently requeſted to reſolve the doubts of inferior judges: but as he was not oppreſſed with a variety of ſubordinate buſineſs, his leiſure and talents were employed to cultivate that dignified ſtyle of eloquence, which, in the corruption of taſte and language, ſtill preſerves the majeſty of the Roman laws [150]. In ſome reſpects, the office of the Imperial quæſtor may be compared with that of a modern chancellor; but the uſe of a great ſeal, which ſeems to have been adopted by the illiterate

ſcriptions of Gruter, the Epiſtles of Pliny, and a deciſive fact in the Auguſtan hiſtory, p. 64.). From Ulpian we may learn, (Pandect. l. i. tit. 13.) that under the government of the houſe of Severus, their provincial adminiſtration was aboliſhed; and in the ſubſequent troubles, the annual or triennial elections of quæſtors muſt have naturally ceaſed.

[149] Cum patris nomine et epiſtolas ipſe dictaret, et edicta conſcriberet, orationeſque in ſenatu recitaret, etiam quæſtoris vice. Sueton. in Tit. c. 6. The office muſt have acquired new dignity, which was occaſionally executed by the heir apparent of the empire. Trajan entruſted the ſame care to Hadrian his quæſtor and couſin. See Dodwell Prælection. Cambden. x. xi. p. 362—394.

[150] ——Terris edicta daturus;
Supplicibus reſponſa.—Oracula regis
Eloquio crevere tuo; nec dignius unquam
Majeſtas meminit ſeſe Romana locutam.
Claudian in Conſulat. Mall. Theodor. 33. See likewiſe Symmachus (Epiſtol. i. 17.) and Caſſiodorius (Variar. vi. 5.).

Barbarians,

CHAP. XVII.

The public treasurer.

Barbarians, was never introduced to attest the public acts of the emperors. 4. The extraordinary title of *count of the sacred largesses*, was bestowed on the treasurer-general of the revenue, with the intention perhaps of inculcating, that every payment flowed from the voluntary bounty of the monarch. To conceive the almost infinite detail of the annual and daily expence of the civil and military administration in every part of a great empire, would exceed the powers of the most vigorous imagination. The actual account employed several hundred persons, distributed into eleven different offices, which were artfully contrived to examine and control their respective operations. The multitude of these agents had a natural tendency to encrease; and it was more than once thought expedient to dismiss to their native homes the useless supernumeraries, who, deserting their honest labours, had pressed with too much eagerness into the lucrative profession of the finances[151]. Twenty-nine provincial receivers, of whom eighteen were honoured with the title of count, corresponded with the treasurer; and he extended his jurisdiction over the mines from whence the precious metals were extracted, over the mints, in which they were converted into the current coin, and over the public treasuries of the most important cities, where they were deposited for the service of the state. The foreign trade of the empire was regulated by this minister, who directed likewise all the linen and

[151] Cod. Theod. l. vi. tit. 30. Cod. Justinian. l. xii. tit. 24.

woollen

woollen manufactures, in which the ſucceſſive operations of ſpinning, weaving, and dying were executed, chiefly by women of a ſervile condition, for the uſe of the palace and army. Twenty-ſix of theſe inſtitutions are enumerated in the weſt, where the arts had been more recently introduced, and a ſtill larger proportion may be allowed for the induſtrious provinces of the eaſt [152]. 5. Beſides the public revenue, which an abſolute monarch might levy and expend according to his pleaſure, the emperors, in the capacity of opulent citizens, poſſeſſed a very extenſive property, which was adminiſtered by the *count*, or treaſurer of *the private eſtate*. Some part had perhaps been the ancient demeſnes of kings and republics; ſome acceſſions might be derived from the families which were ſucceſſively inveſted with the purple; but the moſt conſiderable portion flowed from the impure ſource of confiſcations and forfeitures. The Imperial eſtates were ſcattered through the provinces, from Mauritania to Britain; but the rich and fertile ſoil of Cappadocia tempted the monarch to acquire in that country his faireſt poſſeſſions [153], and either Conſtantine or his ſucceſſors embraced the occaſion of juſtifying avarice by religious zeal. They ſuppreſſed

The private treaſurer.

[152] In the departments of the two counts of the treaſury, the eaſtern part of the *Notitia* happens to be very defective. It may be obſerved, that we had a treaſury-cheſt in London, and a gyneceum or manufacture at Wincheſter. But Britain was not thought worthy either of a mint or of an arſenal. Gaul alone poſſeſſed three of the former, and eight of the latter.

[153] Cod. Theod. l. vi. tit. xxx. leg. 2. and Godefroy ad loc.

CHAP. XVII.

the rich temple of Comana, where the high-prieſt of the goddeſs of war ſupported the dignity of a ſovereign prince; and they applied to their private uſe the conſecrated lands, which were inhabited by ſix thouſand ſubjects or ſlaves of the Deity and her miniſters [154]. But theſe were not the valuable inhabitants: the plains that ſtretch from the foot of Mount Argæus to the banks of the Sarus, bred a generous race of horſes, renowned above all others in the ancient world, for their majeſtic ſhape, and incomparable ſwiftneſs. Theſe *ſacred* animals, deſtined for the ſervice of the palace and the Imperial games, were protected by the laws from the profanation of a vulgar maſter [155]. The demeſnes of Cappadocia were important enough to require the inſpection of a *count* [156]; officers of an inferior rank were ſtationed in the other parts of the empire; and the deputies of the private, as well as thoſe of the public, treaſurer, were maintained in the exerciſe of their independent functions, and encouraged to con-

[154] Strabon. Geograph. l. xii. p. 809. The other temple of Comana, in Pontus, was a colony from that of Cappadocia, l. xii. p. 825. The preſident Des Broſſes (ſee his Saluſte, tom. ii. p. 21.) conjectures that the deity adored in both Comanas was Beltis, the Venus of the eaſt, the goddeſs of generation; a very different being indeed from the goddeſs of war.

[155] Cod. Theod. l. x. tit. vi. de Grege Dominico. Godefroy has collected every circumſtance of antiquity relative to the Cappadocian horſes. One of the fineſt breeds, the Palmatian, was the forfeiture of a rebel, whoſe eſtate lay about ſixteen miles from Tyana, near the great road between Conſtantinople and Antioch.

[156] Juſtinian (Novell. 30.) ſubjected the province of the count of Cappadocia to the immediate authority of the favourite eunuch, who preſided over the ſacred bedchamber.

trol

CHAP. XVII.

trol the authority of the provincial magiſtrates[157]. 6, 7. The choſen bands of cavalry and infantry, which guarded the perſon of the emperor, were under the immediate command of the *two counts of the domeſtics*. The whole number conſiſted of three thouſand five hundred men, divided into ſeven *ſchools*, or troops, of five hundred each; and in the eaſt, this honourable ſervice was almoſt entirely appropriated to the Armenians. Whenever, on public ceremonies, they were drawn up in the courts and porticoes of the palace, their lofty ſtature, ſilent order, and ſplendid arms of ſilver and gold, diſplayed a martial pomp, not unworthy of the Roman majeſty[158]. From the ſeven ſchools two companies of horſe and foot were ſelected, of the protectors, whoſe advantageous ſtation was the hope and reward of the moſt deſerving ſoldiers. They mounted guard in the interior apartments, and were occaſionally diſpatched into the provinces, to execute with celerity and vigour the orders of their maſter[159]. The counts of the domeſtics had ſucceeded to the office of the Prætorian præfects; like the præfects, they aſpired from the ſervice of the palace to the command of armies.

The counts of the domeſtics.

[157] Cod. Theod. l. vi. tit. xxx. leg. 4, &c.

[158] Pancirolus, p. 102. 136. The appearance of theſe military domeſtics is deſcribed in the Latin poem of Corippus, de Laudibus Juſtin. l. iii. 157—179. P. 419, 420, of the Appendix Hiſt. Byzantin. Rom. 177.

[159] Ammianus Marcellinus, who ſerved ſo many years, obtained only the rank of a protector. The firſt ten among theſe honourable ſoldiers were *Clariſſimi*.

CHAP. XVII.

Agents or official ſpies.

The perpetual intercourſe between the court and the provinces was facilitated by the conſtruction of roads and the inſtitution of poſts. But theſe beneficial eſtabliſhments were accidentally connected with a pernicious and intolerable abuſe. Two or three hundred *agents* or meſſengers were employed, under the juriſdiction of the maſter of the offices, to announce the names of the annual conſuls, and the edicts or victories of the emperors. They inſenſibly aſſumed the licence of reporting whatever they could obſerve of the conduct either of magiſtrates or of private citizens; and were ſoon conſidered as the eyes of the monarch [160], and the ſcourge of the people. Under the warm influence of a feeble reign, they multiplied to the incredible number of ten thouſand, diſdained the mild though frequent admonitions of the laws, and exerciſed in the profitable management of the poſts a rapacious and inſolent oppreſſion. Theſe official ſpies, who regularly correſponded with the palace, were encouraged, by favour and reward, anxiouſly to watch the progreſs of every treaſonable deſign, from the faint and latent ſymptoms of diſaffection, to the actual preparation of an open revolt. Their careleſs or criminal violation of truth and juſtice was covered by the conſecrated maſk of zeal; and they might ſecurely aim their poiſoned arrows at the breaſt either of the guilty or the innocent, who had pro-

[160] Xenophon. Cyropæd. l. viii. Briſſon, de Regno Perſico, l. i. N° 190. p. 264. The emperors adopted with pleaſure this Perſian metaphor.

voked

voked their reſentment, or refuſed to purchaſe their ſilence. A faithful ſubject, of Syria perhaps, or of Britain, was expoſed to the danger, or at leaſt to the dread, of being dragged in chains to the court of Milan or Conſtantinople, to defend his life and fortune againſt the malicious charge of theſe privileged informers. The ordinary adminiſtration was conducted by thoſe methods which extreme neceſſity can alone palliate; and the defects of evidence were diligently ſupplied by the uſe of torture [161].

Uſe of torture.

The deceitful and dangerous experiment of the criminal *quæſtion*, as it is emphatically ſtyled, was admitted, rather than approved, in the juriſprudence of the Romans. They applied this ſanguinary mode of examination only to ſervile bodies, whoſe ſufferings were ſeldom weighed by thoſe haughty republicans in the ſcale of juſtice or humanity: but they would never conſent to violate the ſacred perſon of a citizen, till they poſſeſſed the cleareſt evidence of his guilt [162]. The annals of tyranny, from the reign of Tiberius to that of Domitian, circumſtantially relate the executions of many innocent victims; but, as long as the faineſt remembrance was kept alive

[161] For the *Agentes in Rebus*, ſee Ammian. l. xv. c. 3. l. xvi. c. 5. l. xxii. c. 7. with the curious annotations of Valeſius. Cod. Theod. l. vi. tit. xxvii, xxviii, xxix. Among the paſſages collected in the Commentary of Godefroy, the moſt remarkable one is from Libanius, in his diſcourſe concerning the death of Julian.

[162] The Pandects (l. xlviii. tit. xviii.) contain the ſentiments of the moſt celebrated civilians on the ſubject of torture. They ſtrictly confine it to ſlaves; and Ulpian himſelf is ready to acknowledge, that Res eſt fragilis, et periculoſa, et quæ veritatem fallat.

of

CHAP. XVII.

of the national freedom and honour, the laſt hours of a Roman were ſecure from the danger of ignominious torture[163]. The conduct of the provincial magiſtrates was not, however, regulated by the practice of the city, or the ſtrict maxims of the civilians. They found the uſe of torture eſtabliſhed not only among the ſlaves of oriental deſpotiſm, but among the Macedonians, who obeyed a limited monarch; among the Rhodians, who flouriſhed by the liberty of commerce; and even among the ſage Athenians, who had aſſerted and adorned the dignity of human kind[164]. The acquieſcence of the provincials encouraged their governors to acquire, or perhaps to uſurp, a diſcretionary power of employing the rack, to extort from vagrants or plebeian criminals the confeſſion of their guilt, till they inſenſibly proceeded to confound the diſtinction of rank, and to diſregard the privileges of Roman citizens. The apprehenſions of the ſubjects urged them to ſolicit, and the intereſt of the ſovereign engaged him to grant, a variety of ſpecial exemptions, which tacitly allowed, and even authoriſed, the general uſe of torture. They protected all perſons of illuſtrious or honourable rank, biſhops

[163] In the conſpiracy of Piſo againſt Nero, Epicharis (libertina mulier) was the only perſon tortured; the reſt were *intacti tormentis*. It would be ſuperfluous to add a weaker, and it would be difficult to find a ſtronger, example. Tacit. Annal. xv. 57.

[164] Dicendum . . . de Inſtitutis Athenienſium, Rhodiorum, doctiſſimorum hominum, apud quos etiam (id quod acerbiſſimum eſt) liberi, civeſque torquentur. Cicero. Partit. Orat. c. 34. We may learn from the trial of Philotas the practice of the Macedonians. (Diodor. Sicul. l. xvii. p. 604. Q. Curt. l. vi. c. 11.)

and

and their preſbyters, profeſſors of the liberal arts, ſoldiers and their families, municipal officers, and their poſterity to the third generation, and all children under the age of puberty [165]. But a fatal maxim was introduced into the new juriſprudence of the empire, that in the caſe of treaſon, which included every offence that the ſubtlety of lawyers could derive from an *hoſtile intention* towards the prince or republic [166], all privileges were ſuſpended, and all conditions were reduced to the ſame ignominious level. As the ſafety of the emperor was avowedly preferred to every conſideration of juſtice or humanity, the dignity of age, and the tenderneſs of youth, were alike expoſed to the moſt cruel tortures; and the terrors of a malicious information, which might ſelect them as the accomplices, or even as the witneſſes, perhaps, of an imaginary crime, perpetually hung over the heads of the principal citizens of the Roman world [167]. CHAP. XVII.

Theſe evils, however terrible they may appear, were confined to the ſmaller number of Roman Finances.

[165] Heineccius (Element. Jur. Civil. part vii. p. 81.) has collected theſe exemptions into one view.

[166] This definition of the ſage Ulpian (Pandect. l. xlviii. tit. iv.) ſeems to have been adapted to the court of Caracalla, rather than to that of Alexander Severus. See the Codes of Theodoſius and Juſtinian ad leg. Juliam majeſtatis.

[167] Arcadius Chariſius is the oldeſt lawyer quoted in the Pandects to juſtify the univerſal practice of torture in all caſes of treaſon; but this maxim of tyranny, which is admitted by Ammianus (l. xix. c. 12.) with the moſt reſpectful terror, is enforced by ſeveral laws of the ſucceſſors of Conſtantine. See Cod. Theod. l. ix. tit. xxxv. In majeſtatis crimine omnibus æqua eſt conditio.

CHAP. XVII.

ſubjects, whoſe dangerous ſituation was in ſome degree compenſated by the enjoyment of thoſe advantages, either of nature or of fortune, which expoſed them to the jealouſy of the monarch. The obſcure millions of a great empire have much leſs to dread from the cruelty than from the avarice of their maſters; and *their* humble happineſs is principally affected by the grievance of exceſſive taxes, which gently preſſing on the wealthy, deſcend with accelerated weight on the meaner and more indigent claſſes of ſociety. An ingenious philoſopher [168] has calculated the univerſal meaſure of the public impoſitions by the degrees of freedom and ſervitude; and ventures to aſſert, that, according to an invariable law of nature, it muſt always increaſe with the former, and diminiſh in a juſt proportion to the latter. But this reflection, which would tend to alleviate the miſeries of deſpotiſm, is contradicted at leaſt by the hiſtory of the Roman empire; which accuſes the ſame princes of deſpoiling the ſenate of its authority, and the provinces of their wealth. Without aboliſhing all the various cuſtoms and duties on merchandizes, which are imperceptibly diſcharged by the apparent choice of the purchaſer, the policy of Conſtantine and his ſucceſſors preferred a ſimple and direct mode of taxation, more congenial to the ſpirit of an arbitrary government [169].

[168] Monteſquieu, Eſprit des Loix, l. xii. c. 13.

[169] Mr. Hume (Eſſays, vol. i. p. 389.) has ſeen this important truth, with ſome degree of perplexity.

The

CHAP. XVII.

The general tribute, or indiction.

The name and uſe of the *indictions* [170], which ſerve to aſcertain the chronology of the middle ages, were derived from the regular practice of the Roman tributes [171]. The emperor ſubſcribed with his own hand, and in purple ink, the ſolemn edict, or indiction, which was fixed up in the principal city of each dioceſe, during two months previous to the firſt day of September. And, by a very eaſy connection of ideas, the word *indiction* was transferred to the meaſure of tribute which it preſcribed, and to the annual term which it allowed for the payment. This general eſtimate of the ſupplies was proportioned to the real and imaginary wants of the ſtate; but as often as the expence exceeded the revenue, or the revenue fell ſhort of the computation, an additional tax, under the name of *ſuperindiction*, was impoſed on the people, and the moſt valuable attribute of ſovereignty was communicated to the Prætorian præfects, who, on ſome occaſions, were permitted to provide for the unforeſeen and extraordinary exigencies of the public ſervice. The execution of theſe laws (which it would be tedious to purſue in

[170] The cycle of indictions, which may be traced as high as the reign of Conſtantius, or perhaps of his father Conſtantine, is ſtill employed by the Papal court: but the commencement of the year has been very reaſonably altered to the firſt of January. See l'Art de Verifier les Dates, p. xi.; and Dictionnaire Raiſon de la Diplomatique, tom. iii. p. 254; two accurate treatiſes, which come from the workſhop of the Benedictines.

[171] The firſt twenty-eight titles of the eleventh book of the Theodoſian Code are filled with the circumſtantial regulations on the important ſubject of tributes; but they ſuppoſe a clearer knowledge of fundamental principles than it is at preſent in our power to attain.

CHAP. XVII.

their minute and intricate detail) conſiſted of two diſtinct operations; the reſolving the general impoſition into its conſtituent parts, which were aſſeſſed on the provinces, the cities, and the individuals of the Roman world; and the collecting the ſeparate contributions of the individuals, the cities, and the provinces, till the accumulated ſums were poured into the Imperial treaſuries. But as the account between the monarch and the ſubject was perpetually open, and as the renewal of the demand anticipated the perfect diſcharge of the preceding obligation, the weighty machine of the finances was moved by the ſame hands round the circle of its yearly revolution. Whatever was honourable or important in the adminiſtration of the revenue, was committed to the wiſdom of the præfects, and their provincial repreſentatives; the lucrative functions were claimed by a crowd of ſubordinate officers, ſome of whom depended on the treaſurer, others on the governor of the province; and who, in the inevitable conflicts of a perplexed juriſdiction, had frequent opportunities of diſputing with each other the ſpoils of the people. The laborious offices, which could be productive only of envy and reproach, of expence and danger, were impoſed on the *Decurions*, who formed the corporations of the cities, and whom the ſeverity of the Imperial laws had condemned to ſuſtain the burthens of civil ſociety[172]. The

[172] The title concerning the Decurions (l. xii. tit. i.) is the moſt ample in the whole Theodoſian Code; ſince it contains not leſs than one hundred and ninety-two diſtinct laws to aſcertain the duties and privileges of that uſeful order of citizens.

whole

CHAP. XVII.

whole landed property of the empire (without excepting the patrimonial eſtates of the monarch) was the object of ordinary taxation; and every new purchaſer contracted the obligations of the former proprietor. An accurate *cenſus* [173], or ſurvey, was the only equitable mode of aſcertaining the proportion which every citizen ſhould be obliged to contribute for the public ſervice; and from the well-known period of the indictions, there is reaſon to believe that this difficult and expenſive operation was repeated at the regular diſtance of fifteen years. The lands were meaſured by ſurveyors, who were ſent into the provinces; their nature, whether arable or paſture, or vineyards or woods, was diſtinctly reported; and an eſtimate was made of their common value from the average produce of five years. The numbers of ſlaves and of cattle conſtituted an eſſential part of the report; an oath was adminiſtered to the proprietors, which bound them to diſcloſe the true ſtate of their affairs; and their attempts to prevaricate, or elude the intention of the legiſlator, were ſeverely watched, and puniſhed as a capital crime, which included the double guilt of treaſon and ſacrilege [174]. A large portion of the tribute

[173] Habemus enim et hominum numerum qui delati ſunt, et agrûm modum. Eumenius in Panegyr. Vet. viii. 6. See Cod. Theod. l. xiii. tit. x, xi. with Godefroy's Commentary.

[174] Siquis ſacrilegâ vitem falce ſuccíderit, aut feracium Ramorum fœtus hebetaverit, quo declinet fidem Cenſuum, et mentiatur callide paupertatis ingenium, mox detectus capitale ſubibit exitium, et bona ejus in Fiſci jura migrabunt. Cod. Theod. l. xiii. tit. xi. leg. 1. Although this law is not without its ſtudied obſcurity, it is, however, clear enough to prove the minuteneſs of the inquiſition, and the diſproportion of the penalty.

CHAP. XVII.

was paid in money; and of the current coin of the empire, gold alone could be legally accepted [175]. The remainder of the taxes, according to the proportions determined by the annual indiction, was furniſhed in a manner ſtill more direct, and ſtill more oppreſſive. According to the different nature of lands, their real produce, in the various articles of wine or oil, corn or barley, wood or iron, was tranſported by the labour or at the expence of the provincials to the Imperial magazines, from whence they were occaſionally diſtributed, for the uſe of the court, of the army, and of the two capitals, Rome and Conſtantinople. The commiſſioners of the revenue were ſo frequently obliged to make conſiderable purchaſes, that they were ſtrictly prohibited from allowing any compenſation, or from receiving in money the value of thoſe ſupplies which were exacted in kind. In the primitive ſimplicity of ſmall communities, this method may be well adapted to collect the almoſt voluntary offerings of the people; but it is at once ſuſceptible of the utmoſt latitude and of the utmoſt ſtrictneſs, which in a corrupt and abſolute monarchy muſt introduce a perpetual conteſt between the power of oppreſſion and the arts of fraud [176]. The agriculture of the Roman

[175] The aſtoniſhment of Pliny would have ceaſed. Equidem miror P. R. victis gentibus argentum ſemper imperitaſſe non aurum. Hiſt. Natur. xxxiii. 15.

[176] Some precautions were taken (ſee Cod. Theod. l. xi. tit. ii. and Cod. Juſtinian. l. x. tit. xxvii. leg. 1, 2, 3.) to reſtrain the magiſtrates from the abuſe of their authority, either in the exaction or in the purchaſe of corn: but thoſe who had learning enough to read

CHAP. XVII.

Roman provinces was insensibly ruined, and, in the progress of despotism, which tends to disappoint its own purpose, the emperors were obliged to derive some merit from the forgiveness of debts, or the remission of tributes, which their subjects were utterly incapable of paying. According to the new division of Italy, the fertile and happy province of Campania, the scene of the early victories and of the delicious retirements of the citizens of Rome, extended between the sea and the Appenine from the Tyber to the Silarus. Within sixty years after the death of Constantine, and on the evidence of an actual survey, an exemption was granted in favour of three hundred and thirty thousand English acres of desert and uncultivated land; which amounted to one-eighth of the whole surface of the province. As the footsteps of the Barbarians had not yet been seen in Italy, the cause of this amazing desolation, which is recorded in the laws, can be ascribed only to the administration of the Roman emperors.[177]

Either from design or from accident, the mode of assessment seemed to unite the substance of a

Assessed in the form of a capitation.

read the orations of Cicero against Verres (iii. de Frumento), might furnish materials to all the various arts of oppression, with regard to the weight, the price, the quality, and the carriage. The avarice of an unlettered governor would supply the ignorance of precept or precedent.

177 Cod. Theod. l. xi. tit. xxviii. leg. 2. published the 24th of March, A. D. 395, by the emperor Honorius, only two months after the death of his father Theodosius. He speaks of 528,042 Roman jugera, which I have reduced to the English measure. The jugerum contained 28,800 square Roman feet.

CHAP. XVII.

land-tax with the forms of a capitation [178]. The returns which were ſent of every province or diſtrict, expreſſed the number of tributary ſubjects, and the amount of the public impoſitions. The latter of theſe ſums was divided by the former; and the eſtimate, that ſuch a province contained ſo many *capita*, or heads of tribute; and that each *head* was rated at ſuch a price, was univerſally received, not only in the popular, but even in the legal computation. The value of a tributary head muſt have varied, according to many accidental, or at leaſt fluctuating circumſtances; but ſome knowledge has been preſerved of a very curious fact, the more important, ſince it relates to one of the richeſt provinces of the Roman empire, and which now flouriſhes as the moſt ſplendid of the European kingdoms. The rapacious miniſters of Conſtantius had exhauſted the wealth of Gaul, by exacting twenty-five pieces of gold for the annual tribute of every head. The humane policy of his ſucceſſor reduced the capitation to ſeven pieces [179]. A moderate proportion between theſe oppoſite extremes of extravagant oppreſſion and of tranſient indulgence, may therefore be fixed at ſixteen pieces of gold,

[178] Godefroy (Cod. Theod. tom. vi. p. 116.) argues with weight and learning on the ſubject of the capitation; but while he explains the *caput*, as a ſhare or meaſure of property, he too abſolutely excludes the idea of a perſonal aſſeſſment.

[179] Quid profuerit (*Julianus*) anhelantibus extremâ penuriâ Gallis, hinc maxime claret, quod primi us partes eas ingreſſus, pro *capitibus* ſingulis tributi nomine vicenos quinos aureos reperit flagitari; diſcedens vero ſeptenos tantum munera univerſa complentes. Ammian. l. xvi. c. 5.

or

or about nine pounds ſterling, the common ſtandard perhaps of the impoſitions of Gaul[180]. But this calculation, or rather indeed the facts from whence it is deduced, cannot fail of ſuggeſting two difficulties to a thinking mind, who will be at once ſurpriſed by the *equality*, and by the *enormity* of the capitation. An attempt to explain them may perhaps reflect ſome light on the intereſting ſubject of the finances of the declining empire.

I. It is obvious, that, as long as the immutable conſtitution of human nature produces and maintains ſo unequal a diviſion of property, the moſt numerous part of the community would be deprived of their ſubſiſtence, by the equal aſſeſſment of a tax from which the ſovereign would derive a very trifling revenue. Such indeed might be the theory of the Roman capitation; but in the practice, this unjuſt equality was no longer

[180] In the calculation of any ſum of money under Conſtantine and his ſucceſſors, we need only refer to the excellent diſcourſe of Mr. Greaves on the Denarius, for the proof of the following principles: 1. That the ancient and modern Roman pound, containing 5256 grains of Troy weight, is about one twelfth lighter than the Engliſh pound, which is compoſed of 5760 of the ſame grains. 2. That the pound of gold, which had once been divided into forty-eight *aurei*, was at this time coined into ſeventy-two ſmaller pieces of the ſame denomination. 3. That five of theſe aurei were the legal tender for a pound of ſilver, and that conſequently the pound of gold was exchanged for fourteen pounds eight ounces of ſilver, according to the Roman, or about thirteen pounds according to the Engliſh, weight. 4. That the Engliſh pound of ſilver is coined into ſixty-two ſhillings. From theſe elements we may compute the Roman pound of gold, the uſual method of reckoning large ſums, at forty pounds ſterling; and we may fix the currency of the *aureus* at ſomewhat more than eleven ſhillings.

CHAP. XVII.

felt, as the tribute was collected on the principle of a *real*, not of a *perſonal* impoſition. Several indigent citizens contributed to compoſe a ſingle *head*, or ſhare of taxation; while the wealthy provincial, in proportion to his fortune, alone repreſented ſeveral of thoſe imaginary beings. In a poetical requeſt, addreſſed to one of the laſt and moſt deſerving of the Roman Princes who reigned in Gaul, Sidonius Apollinaris perſonifies his tribute under the figure of a triple monſter, the Geryon of the Grecian fables, and intreats the new Hercules that he would moſt graciouſly be pleaſed to ſave his life by cutting off three of his heads.[28] The fortune of Sidonius far exceeded the uſhonary wealth of a poet; but if he had purſued the alluſion, he muſt have painted many of the Gallic nobles with the hundred heads of the deadly Hydra, ſpreading over the face of the country, and devouring the ſubſtance of an hundred families. II. The difficulty of allowing an annual ſum of about nine pounds ſterling, even for the average of the capitation of Gaul, may be rendered more evident by the compariſon of the preſent ſtate of the ſame country, as it is now governed by the abſolute monarch of an induſtrious, wealthy, and affectionate people. The taxes of France cannot be magnified, either by fear or by

[28] Geryonen nos eſſe puta, monſtrumque tributum,
Hic *capita* ut vivam, tu mihi tolle *tria*.
Sidon. Apollinar. Carm. xii.

The reputation of Father Simond led me to expect more ſatisfaction than I have found in his note (p. 144.) on this rendirkable paſſage. The words, ſuo vel *ſuorum* nomine, betray the perplexity of the commentator.

flattery, beyond the annual amount of eighteen millions sterling, which ought perhaps to be shared among four-and-twenty millions of inhabitants[182]. Seven millions of these, in the capacity of fathers, or brothers, or husbands, may discharge the obligations of the remaining multitude of women and children; yet the equal proportion of each tributary subject will scarcely rise above fifty shillings of our money, instead of a proportion almost four times as considerable, which was regularly imposed on their Gallic ancestors. The reason of this difference may be found, not so much in the relative scarcity or plenty of gold and silver, as in the different state of society in ancient Gaul and in modern France. In a country where personal freedom is the privilege of every subject, the whole mass of taxes, whether they are levied on property or on consumption, may be fairly divided among the whole

CHAP. XVII.

[182] This assertion, however formidable it may seem, is founded on the original registers of births, deaths, and marriages, collected by public authority, and now deposited in the *Contrôle General* at Paris. The annual average of births throughout the whole kingdom, taken in five years (from 1770 to 1774, both inclusive), is, 479,649 boys, and 449,269 girls, in all 928,918 children. The province of French Hainault alone furnishes 9906 births: and we are assured, by an actual numeration of the people, annually repeated from the year 1773 to the year 1776, that, upon an average, Hainault contains 257,997 inhabitants. By the rules of fair analogy, we might infer, that the ordinary proportion of annual births to the whole people, is about 1 to 26; and that the kingdom of France contains 24,151,868 persons of both sexes and of every age. If we content ourselves with the more moderate proportion of 1 to 25, the whole population will amount to 23,222,950. From the diligent researches of the French government (which are not unworthy of our own imitation), we may hope to obtain a still greater degree of certainty on this important subject.

body

CHAP. XVII.

body of the nation. But the far greater part of the lands of ancient Gaul, as well as of the other provinces of the Roman world, were cultivated by ſlaves, or by peaſants, whoſe dependent condition was a leſs rigid ſervitude[183]. In ſuch a ſtate the poor were maintained at the expence of the maſters, who enjoyed the fruits of their labour; and as the rolls of tribute were filled only with the names of thoſe citizens who poſſeſſed the means of an honourable, or at leaſt of a decent ſubſiſtence, the comparative ſmallneſs of their numbers explains and juſtifies the high rate of their capitation. The truth of this aſſertion may be illuſtrated by the following example: The Ædui, one of the moſt powerful and civilized tribes or *cities* of Gaul, occupied an extent of territory, which now contains above five hundred thouſand inhabitants, in the two eccleſiaſtical dioceſes of Autun and Nevers[184]: and with the

[183] Cod. Theod. l. v. tit. ix, x, xi. Cod. Juſtinian. l. xi. tit. lxiii. Coloni appellantur qui conditionem debent genitali ſolo, propter agriculturam ſub dominio poſſeſſorum. Auguſtin. de Civitate Dei, l. x. c. 1.

[184] The ancient juriſdiction of (*Auguſtodunum*) Autun in Burgundy, the capital of the Ædui, comprehended the adjacent territory of (*Noviodunum*) Nevers. See d'Anville, Notice de l'ancienne Gaule, p. 491. The two dioceſes of Autun and Nevers are now compoſed, the former of 610, and the latter of 160, pariſhes. The regiſters of births, taken during eleven years, in 476 pariſhes of the ſame province of Burgundy, and multiplied by the moderate proportion of 25 (ſee Meſſance Recherches ſur la Population, p. 142.), may authoriſe us to aſſign an average number of 656 perſons for each pariſh, which being again multiplied by the 770 pariſhes of the dioceſes of Nevers and Autun, will produce the ſum of 505,120 perſons for the extent of country which was once poſſeſſed by the Ædui.

probable

CHAP. XVII.

probable acceſſion of thoſe of Châlons and Maçon [185], the population would amount to eight hundred thouſand ſouls. In the time of Conſtantine, the territory of the Ædui afforded no more than twenty-five thouſand *heads* of capitation, of whom ſeven thouſand were diſcharged by that prince from the intolerable weight of tribute [186]. A juſt analogy would ſeem to countenance the opinion of an ingenious hiſtorian [187], that the free and tributary citizens did not ſurpaſs the number of half a million; and if, in the ordinary adminiſtration of government, their annual payments may be computed at about four millions and a half of our money, it would appear, that although the ſhare of each individual was four times as conſiderable, a fourth part only of the modern taxes of France was levied on the Imperial province of Gaul. The exactions of Conſtantius may be calculated at ſeven millions ſterling, which were reduced to two millions by the humanity or the wiſdom of Julian.

[185] We might derive an additional ſupply of 301,750 inhabitants from the dioceſes of Châlons (*Cabillonum*) and of Maçon (*Matiſco*); ſince they contain, the one 200, and the other 260, pariſhes. This acceſſion of territory might be juſtified by very ſpecious reaſons. 1. Châlons and Maçon were undoubtedly within the original juriſdiction of the Ædui. (See d'Anville Notice, p. 187. 443.). 2. In the Notitia of Gaul, they are enumerated not as *Civitates*, but merely as *Caſtra*. 3. They do not appear to have been epiſcopal ſeats before the fifth and ſixth centuries. Yet there is a paſſage in Eumenius (Panegyr. Vet. viii. 7.) which very forcibly deters me from extending the territory of the Ædui in the reign of Conſtantine, along the beautiful banks of the navigable Saône.

[186] Eumenius in Panegyr. Vet. viii. 11.

[187] L'Abbé du Bos Hiſt. Critique de la M. F. tom. i. p. 121.

But

CHAP. XVII.

Capitation on trade and induſtry.

But this tax, or capitation, on the proprietors of land, would have ſuffered a rich and numerous claſs of free citizens to eſcape. With the view of ſharing that ſpecies of wealth which is derived from art or labour, and which exiſts in money or in merchandiſe, the emperors impoſed a diſtinct and perſonal tribute on the trading part of their ſubjects[128]. Some exemptions, very ſtrictly confined both in time and place, were allowed to the proprietors who diſpoſed of the produce of their own eſtates. Some indulgence was granted to the profeſſion of the liberal arts: but every other branch of commercial induſtry was affected by the ſeverity of the law. The honourable merchant of Alexandria, who imported the gems and ſpices of India for the uſe of the weſtern world; the uſurer, who derived from the intereſt of money a ſilent and ignominious profit; the ingenious manufacturer, the diligent mechanic, and even the moſt obſcure retailer of a ſequeſtered village, were obliged to admit the officers of the revenue into the partnerſhip of their gain: and the ſovereign of the Roman empire, who tolerated the profeſſion, conſented to ſhare the infamous ſalary of public proſtitutes. As this general tax upon induſtry was collected every fourth year, it was ſtyled the *Luſtral Contribution*: and the hiſtorian Zoſimus[129] laments that the approach of the fatal period was announced by the tears and ter-

[128] See Cod. Theod. l. xiii. tit. i. and iv.

[129] Zoſimus, l. ii. p. 115. There is probably as much paſſion and prejudice in the attack of Zoſimus, as in the elaborate defence of the memory of Conſtantine by the zealous Dr. Howell. Hiſt. of the World, vol. ii. p. 20.

rors

rors of the citizens, who were often compelled by the impending scourge to embrace the most abhorred and unnatural methods of procuring the sum at which their property had been assessed. The testimony of Zosimus cannot indeed be justified from the charge of passion and prejudice; but, from the nature of this tribute, it seems reasonable to conclude that it was arbitrary in the distribution, and extremely rigorous in the mode of collecting. The secret wealth of commerce, and the precarious profits of art or labour, are susceptible only of a discretionary valuation, which is seldom disadvantageous to the interest of the treasury; and as the person of the trader supplies the want of a visible and permanent security, the payment of the imposition, which, in the case of a land-tax, may be obtained by the seizure of property, can rarely be extorted by any other means than those of corporal punishments. The cruel treatment of the insolvent debtors of the state, is attested, and was perhaps mitigated by a very humane edict of Constantine, who, disclaiming the use of racks and of scourges, allots a spacious and airy prison for the place of their confinement [190]. CHAP. XVII.

These general taxes were imposed and levied by the absolute authority of the monarch; but the occasional offerings of the *coronary gold* still retained the name and semblance of popular consent. It was an ancient custom that the allies of the republic, who ascribed their safety or deliver- Free gifts.

[190] Cod. Theod. l. xi. tit. vii. leg. 3.

ance

CHAP. XVII.

ance to the ſucceſs of the Roman arms; and even the cities of Italy, who admired the virtues of their victorious general, adorned the pomp of his triumph by their voluntary gifts of crowns of gold, which, after the ceremony, were conſecrated in the temple of Jupiter, to remain a laſting monument of his glory to future ages. The progreſs of zeal and flattery ſoon multiplied the number, and increaſed the ſize, of theſe popular donations; and the triumph of Cæſar was enriched with two thouſand eight hundred and twenty-two maſſy crowns, whoſe weight amounted to twenty thouſand four hundred and fourteen pounds of gold. This treaſure was immediately melted down by the prudent dictator, who was ſatisfied that it would be more ſerviceable to his ſoldiers than to the gods: his example was imitated by his ſucceſſors; and the cuſtom was introduced, of exchanging theſe ſplendid ornaments for the more acceptable preſent of the current gold coin of the empire[191]. The ſpontaneous offering was at length exacted as the debt of duty; and inſtead of being confined to the occaſion of a triumph, it was ſuppoſed to be granted by the ſeveral cities and provinces of the monarchy, as often as the emperor condeſcended to announce his acceſſion, his conſulſhip, the birth of a ſon, the creation of a Cæſar, a victory over the Barbarians, or any other real or imaginary event which graced the

[191] See Lipſius de Magnitud. Romana, l. ii. c. 9. The Tarragoneſe Spain preſented the emperor Claudius with a crown of gold of ſeven, and Gaul with another of nine, *hundred* pounds weight. I have followed the rational emendation of Lipſius.

annals

annals of his reign. The peculiar free gift of the senate of Rome was fixed by custom at sixteen hundred pounds of gold, or about sixty-four thousand pounds sterling. The oppressed subjects celebrated their own felicity, that their sovereign should graciously consent to accept this feeble but voluntary testimony of their loyalty and gratitude [192]. CHAP. XVII.

A people elated by pride, or soured by discontent, are seldom qualified to form a just estimate of their actual situation. The subjects of Constantine were incapable of discerning the decline of genius and manly virtue, which so far degraded them below the dignity of their ancestors; but they could feel and lament the rage of tyranny, the relaxation of discipline, and the encrease of taxes. The impartial historian, who acknowledges the justice of their complaints, will observe some favourable circumstances which tended to alleviate the misery of their condition. The threatening tempest of Barbarians, which so soon subverted the foundations of Roman greatness, was still repelled, or suspended, on the frontiers. The arts of luxury and literature were cultivated, and the elegant pleasures of society were enjoyed by the inhabitants of a considerable portion of the globe. The forms, the pomp, and the expence of the civil administration contributed to restrain the irregular licence of the soldiers; and although the laws were violated by Conclusion.

[192] Cod. Theod. l. xii. tit. xiii. The senators were supposed to be exempt from the *Aurum Coronarium*; but the *Auri Oblatio*, which was required at their hands, was precisely of the same nature.

CHAP. XVII.

power, or perverted by ſubtlety, the ſage principles of the Roman juriſprudence preſerved a ſenſe of order and equity, unknown to the deſpotic governments of the eaſt. The rights of mankind might derive ſome protection from religion and philoſophy; and the name of freedom, which could no longer alarm, might ſometimes admoniſh, the ſucceſſors of Auguſtus, that they did not reign over a nation of Slaves or Barbarians [193].

[193] The great Theodoſius, in his judicious advice to his ſon (Claudian in iv. Conſulat. Honorii, 214, &c.), diſtinguiſhes the ſtation of a Roman prince from that of a Parthian monarch. Virtue was neceſſary for the one. Birth might ſuffice for the other.

CHAP. XVIII.

Character of Conſtantine.—Gothic War.—Death of Conſtantine.—Diviſion of the Empire among his three Sons.—Perſian War.—Tragic Deaths of Conſtantine the Younger and Conſtans.—Uſurpation of Magnentius.—Civil War.—Victory of Conſtantius.

CHAP. XVIII.

Character of Conſtantine.

THE character of the prince who removed the ſeat of empire, and introduced ſuch important changes into the civil and religious conſtitution of his country, has fixed the attention, and divided the opinions, of mankind. By the grateful zeal of the Chriſtians, the deliverer of the church has been decorated with every attribute of a hero, and even of a ſaint; while the diſcontent of the vanquiſhed party has compared Conſtantine to the moſt abhorred of thoſe tyrants, who, by their vice and weakneſs, diſhonoured the Imperial purple. The ſame paſſions have in ſome degree been perpetuated to ſucceeding generations, and the character of Conſtantine is conſidered, even in the preſent age, as an object either of ſatire or of panegyric. By the impartial union of thoſe defects which are confeſſed by his warmeſt admirers, and of thoſe virtues which are acknowledged by his moſt implacable enemies, we might hope to delineate a juſt portrait of that extraordinary man, which the truth and candour of hiſtory ſhould adopt without a

CHAP. XVIII.

bluſh [1]. But it would ſoon appear, that the vain attempt to blend ſuch diſcordant colours, and to reconcile ſuch inconſiſtent qualities, muſt produce a figure monſtrous rather than human, unleſs it is viewed in its proper and diſtinct lights, by a careful ſeparation of the different periods of the reign of Conſtantine.

His virtues.

The perſon, as well as the mind, of Conſtantine had been enriched by nature with her choiceſt endowments. His ſtature was lofty, his countenance majeſtic, his deportment graceful; his ſtrength and activity were diſplayed in every manly exerciſe, and from his earlieſt youth, to a very advanced ſeaſon of life, he preſerved the vigour of his conſtitution by a ſtrict adherence to the domeſtic virtues of chaſtity and temperance. He delighted in the ſocial intercourſe of familiar converſation; and though he might ſometimes indulge his diſpoſition to raillery with leſs reſerve than was required by the ſevere dignity of his ſtation, the courteſy and liberality of his manners gained the hearts of all who approached him. The ſincerity of his friendſhip has been ſuſpected; yet he ſhewed, on ſome occaſions, that he was not incapable of a warm and laſting attachment. The diſadvantage of an illiterate education had not prevented him from forming a juſt eſtimate

[1] On ne ſe trompera point ſur Conſtantin, en croyant tout le mal qu'en dit Euſebe, et tout le bien qu'en dit Zoſime. Fleury Hiſt. Eccleſiaſtique, tom. iii. p. 233. Euſebius and Zoſimus form indeed the two extremes of flattery and invective. The intermediate ſhades are expreſſed by thoſe writers, whoſe character or ſituation varioufly tempered the influence of their religious zeal.

of

of the value of learning; and the arts and ſciences derived ſome encouragement from the munificent protection of Conſtantine. In the diſpatch of buſineſs, his diligence was indefatigable; and the active powers of his mind were almoſt continually exerciſed in reading, writing, or meditating, in giving audience to ambaſſadors, and in examining the complaints of his ſubjects. Even thoſe who cenſured the propriety of his meaſures were compelled to acknowledge, that he poſſeſſed magnanimity to conceive, and patience to execute, the moſt arduous deſigns, without being checked either by the prejudices of education, or by the clamours of the multitude. In the field, he infuſed his own intrepid ſpirit into the troops, whom he conducted with the talents of a conſummate general; and to his abilities, rather than to his fortune, we may aſcribe the ſignal victories which he obtained over the foreign and domeſtic foes of the republic. He loved glory, as the reward, perhaps as the motive, of his labours. The boundleſs ambition, which, from the moment of his accepting the purple at York, appears as the ruling paſſion of his ſoul, may be juſtified by the dangers of his own ſituation, by the character of his rivals, by the conſciouſneſs of ſuperior merit, and by the proſpect that his ſucceſs would enable him to reſtore peace and order to the diſtracted empire. In his civil wars againſt Maxentius and Licinius, he had engaged on his ſide the inclinations of the people, who compared the undiſſembled vices of thoſe tyrants, with the ſpirit of wiſdom and juſtice which ſeemed

CHAP. XVIII.

to direct the general tenor of the administration of Constantine[2].

His vices.

Had Constantine fallen on the banks of the Tyber, or even in the plains of Hadrianople, such is the character which, with a few exceptions, he might have transmitted to posterity. But the conclusion of his reign (according to the moderate and indeed tender sentence of a writer of the same age) degraded him from the rank which he had acquired among the most deserving of the Roman princes[3]. In the life of Augustus, we behold the tyrant of the republic, converted, almost by imperceptible degrees, into the father of his country and of human kind. In that of Constantine, we may contemplate a hero, who had so long inspired his subjects with love, and his enemies with terror, degenerating into a cruel and dissolute monarch, corrupted by his fortune, or raised by conquest above the necessity of dissimulation. The general peace which he maintained during the last fourteen years of his reign,

A. D. 323—337.

[2] The virtues of Constantine are collected for the most part from Eutropius, and the younger Victor, two sincere pagans, who wrote after the extinction of his family. Even Zosimus, and the *Emperor* Julian, acknowledge his personal courage and military atchievements.

[3] See Eutropius, x. 6. In primo Imperii tempore optimis principibus, ultimo mediis comparandus. From the ancient Greek version of Pœanius (edit. Havercamp. p. 697.), I am inclined to suspect that Eutropius had originally written *vix* mediis; and that the offensive monosyllable was dropped by the wilful inadvertency of transcribers. Aurelius Victor expresses the general opinion by a vulgar and indeed obscure proverb. *Trachala* decem annis præstantissimus; duodecim sequentibus *latro*; decem novissimis *fu, illus* ob immodicas profusiones.

CHAP. XVIII.

was a period of apparent ſplendor rather than of real proſperity; and the old age of Conſtantine was diſgraced by the oppoſite yet reconcileable vices of rapaciouſneſs and prodigality. The accumulated treaſures found in the palaces of Maxentius and Licinius, were laviſhly conſumed; the various innovations introduced by the conqueror, were attended with an encreaſing expence; the coſt of his buildings, his court, and his feſtivals, required an immediate and plentiful ſupply; and the oppreſſion of the people was the only fund which could ſupport the magnificence of the ſovereign [4]. His unworthy favourites, enriched by the boundleſs liberality of their maſter, uſurped with impunity the privilege of rapine and corruption [5]. A ſecret but univerſal decay was felt in every part of the public adminiſtration, and the emperor himſelf, though he ſtill retained the obedience, gradually loſt the eſteem, of his ſubjects. The dreſs and manners, which, towards the decline of life, he choſe to affect, ſerved only to degrade him in the eyes of mankind. The Aſiatic pomp, which had been adopted by the pride of Diocletian, aſſumed an air of ſoftneſs and effeminacy in the perſon of Conſtantine. He

4 Julian. Orat. i. p. 8. in a flattering diſcourſe pronounced before the ſon of Conſtantine; and Cæſares, p. 335. Zoſimus, p. 114, 115. The ſtately buildings of Conſtantinople, &c. may be quoted as a laſting and unexceptionable proof of the profuſeneſs of their founder.

5 The impartial Ammianus deſerves all our confidence. Proximorum fauces aperuit primus omnium Conſtantinus. L. xvi. c. 8. Euſebius himſelf confeſſes the abuſe (Vit. Conſtantin. l. iv. c. 29. 54.); and ſome of the Imperial laws feebly point out the remedy. See above, p. 53. of this volume.

CHAP. XVIII.

is repreſented with falſe hair of various colours, laboriouſly arranged by the ſkilful artiſts of the times; a diadem of a new and more expenſive faſhion; a profuſion of gems and pearls, of collars and bracelets, and a variegated flowing robe of ſilk, moſt curiouſly embroidered with flowers of gold. In ſuch apparel, ſcarcely to be excuſed by the youth and folly of Elagabalus, we are at a loſs to diſcover the wiſdom of an aged monarch, and the ſimplicity of a Roman veteran[6]. A mind thus relaxed by proſperity and indulgence, was incapable of riſing to that magnanimity which diſdains ſuſpicion, and dares to forgive. The deaths of Maximian and Licinius may perhaps be juſtified by the maxims of policy, as they are taught in the ſchools of tyrants; but an impartial narrative of the executions, or rather murders, which ſullied the declining age of Conſtantine, will ſuggeſt to our moſt candid thoughts, the idea of a prince, who could ſacrifice without reluctance the laws of juſtice, and the feelings of nature, to the dictates either of his paſſions or of his intereſt.

His family.

The ſame fortune which ſo invariably followed the ſtandard of Conſtantine, ſeemed to ſecure the hopes and comforts of his domeſtic life. Thoſe among his predeceſſors who had enjoyed the longeſt and moſt proſperous reigns, Auguſtus,

[6] Julian, in the Cæſars, attempts to ridicule his uncle. His ſuſpicious teſtimony is confirmed however by the learned Spanheim, with the authority of medals (ſee Commentaire, p. 156. 299. 397. 459.). Euſebius (Orat. c. 5.) alleges, that Conſtantine dreſſed for the public, not for himſelf. Were this admitted, the vaineſt coxcomb could never want an excuſe.

CHAP. XVIII.

Trajan, and Diocletian, had been disappointed of posterity; and the frequent revolutions had never allowed sufficient time for any Imperial family to grow up and multiply under the shade of the purple. But the royalty of the Flavian line, which had been first ennobled by the Gothic Claudius, descended through several generations; and Constantine himself derived from his royal father the hereditary honours which he transmitted to his children. The emperor had been twice married. Minervina, the obscure but lawful object of his youthful attachment[7], had left him only one son, who was called Crispus. By Fausta, the daughter of Maximian, he had three daughters, and three sons, known by the kindred names of Constantine, Constantius, and Constans. The unambitious brothers of the great Constantine, Julius Constantius, Dalmatius, and Hannibalianus[8], were permitted to enjoy the most honourable rank, and the most affluent fortune, that could be consistent with a private station. The youngest of the three lived without a name, and died without posterity. His two elder brothers obtained in marriage the daughters of wealthy senators, and propagated new branches of the Imperial race. Gallus and

[7] Zosimus and Zonaras agree in representing Minervina as the concubine of Constantine: but Ducange has very gallantly rescued her character, by producing a decisive passage from one of the panegyrics: "Ab ipso fine pueritiæ te matrimonii legibus dedisti."

[8] Ducange (Familiæ Byzantinæ, p. 44.) bestows on him, after Zonaras, the name of Constantine; a name somewhat unlikely, as it was already occupied by the elder brother. That of Hannibalianus is mentioned in the Paschal Chronicle, and is approved by Tillemont, Hist. des Empereurs, tom. iv. p. 527.

Julian

CHAP. XVIII.

Julian afterwards became the moſt illuſtrious of the children of Julius Conſtantius, the *Patrician*. The two ſons of Dalmatius, who had been decorated with the vain title of *Cenſor*, were named Dalmatius and Hannibalianus. The two ſiſters of the great Conſtantine, Anaſtaſia and Eutropia, were beſtowed on Optatus and Nepotianus, two ſenators of noble birth and of conſular dignity. His third ſiſter, Conſtantia, was diſtinguiſhed by her pre-eminence of greatneſs and of miſery. She remained the widow of the vanquiſhed Licinius; and it was by her entreaties, that an innocent boy, the offspring of their marriage, preſerved for ſome time, his life, the title of Cæſar, and a precarious hope of the ſucceſſion. Beſides the females, and the allies of the Flavian houſe, ten or twelve males, to whom the language of modern courts would apply the title of princes of the blood, ſeemed, according to the order of their birth, to be deſtined either to inherit or to ſupport the throne of Conſtantine. But in leſs than thirty years, this numerous and encreaſing family was reduced to the perſons of Conſtantius and Julian, who alone had ſurvived a ſeries of crimes and calamities, ſuch as the tragic poets have deplored in the devoted lines of Pelops and of Cadmus.

Virtues of Criſpus.

Criſpus, the eldeſt ſon of Conſtantine, and the preſumptive heir of the empire, is repreſented by impartial hiſtorians as an amiable and accompliſhed youth. The care of his education, or at leaſt of his ſtudies, was entruſted to Lactantius, the moſt eloquent of the Chriſtians; a præceptor admirably

admirably qualified to form the taſte, and to excite the virtues, of his illuſtrious diſciple[9]. At the age of ſeventeen, Criſpus was inveſted with the title of Cæſar, and the adminiſtration of the Gallic provinces, where the inroads of the Germans gave him an early occaſion of ſignalizing his military proweſs. In the civil war which broke out ſoon afterwards, the father and ſon divided their powers; and this hiſtory has already celebrated the valour as well as conduct diſplayed by the latter, in forcing the ſtreights of the Helleſpont, ſo obſtinately defended by the ſuperior fleet of Licinius. This naval victory contributed to determine the event of the war; and the names of Conſtantine and of Criſpus were united in the joyful acclamations of their eaſtern ſubjects: who loudly proclaimed, that the world had been ſubdued, and was now governed, by an emperor endowed with every virtue; and by his illuſtrious ſon, a prince beloved of heaven, and the lively image of his father's perfections. The public favour, which ſeldom accompanies old age, diffuſed its luſtre over the youth of Criſpus. He deſerved the eſteem, and he engaged the affections, of the court, the army, and the people. The experienced merit of a reigning monarch is acknowledged by his ſubjects with reluctance, and frequently denied with partial and diſcon-

CHAP. XVIII.

9 Jerom. in Chron. The poverty of Lactantius may be applied either to the praiſe of the diſintereſted philoſopher, or to the ſhame of the unfeeling patron. See Tillemont, Mem. Eccleſiaſt. tom. vi. part i. p. 345. Dupin, Bibliotheque Eccleſiaſt. tom. i. p. 205. Lardner's Credibility of the Goſpel Hiſtory, part ii. vol. vii. p. 66.

tented

CHAP. XVIII.

tented murmurs; while, from the opening virtues of his ſucceſſor, they fondly conceive the moſt unbounded hopes of private as well as public felicity [10].

Jealouſy of Conſtantine. A. D. 324. Oct. 10.

This dangerous popularity ſoon excited the attention of Conſtantine, who, both as a father and as a king, was impatient of an equal. Inſtead of attempting to ſecure the allegiance of his ſon, by the generous ties of confidence and gratitude, he reſolved to prevent the miſchiefs which might be apprehended from diſſatisfied ambition. Criſpus ſoon had reaſon to complain, that while his infant brother Conſtantius was ſent, with the title of Cæſar, to reign over his peculiar department of the Gallic provinces [11], *he*, a prince of mature years, who had performed ſuch recent and ſignal ſervices, inſtead of being raiſed to the ſuperior rank of Auguſtus, was confined almoſt a priſoner to his father's court; and expoſed, without power or defence, to every calumny which the malice of his enemies could ſuggeſt. Under ſuch painful circumſtances, the royal youth might not always be able to compoſe his behaviour, or ſuppreſs his diſcontent; and we may be aſſured, that he was

[10] Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccleſiaſt. l. x. c. 9. Eutropius (x. 6.) ſtyles him "egregium virum;" and Julian (Orat. i.) very plainly alludes to the exploits of Criſpus in the civil war. See Spanheim. Comment. p. 92.

[11] Compare Idatius and the Paſchal Chronicle, with Ammianus (l. xiv. c. 5.). The *year* in which Conſtantius was created Cæſar, ſeems to be more accurately fixed by the two chronologiſts; but the hiſtorian who lived in his court, could not be ignorant of the *day* of the anniverſary. For the appointment of the new Cæſar to the provinces of Gaul, ſee Julian, Orat. i. p. 12. Godefroy, Chronol. Legum, p. 26. and Blondel de la Primauté de l'Egliſe, p. 1183.

encompaſſed

CHAP. XVIII.

encompaſſed by a train of indiſcreet or perfidious followers, who aſſiduouſly ſtudied to inflame, and who were perhaps inſtructed to betray, the unguarded warmth of his reſentment. An edict of Conſtantine, publiſhed about this time, manifeſtly indicates his real or affected ſuſpicions, that a ſecret conſpiracy had been formed againſt his perſon and government. By all the allurements of honours and rewards, he invites informers of every degree to accuſe without exception his magiſtrates or miniſters, his friends or his moſt intimate favourites, proteſting, with a ſolemn aſſeveration, that he himſelf will liſten to the charge, that he himſelf will revenge his injuries; and concluding with a prayer, which diſcovers ſome apprehenſion of danger, that the providence of the Supreme Being may ſtill continue to protect the ſafety of the emperor and of the empire [12].

A. D. 325. October 1.

The informers, who complied with ſo liberal an invitation, were ſufficiently verſed in the arts of courts to ſelect the friends and adherents of Criſpus as the guilty perſons; nor is there any reaſon to diſtruſt the veracity of the emperor, who had promiſed an ample meaſure of revenge and puniſhment. The policy of Conſtantine maintained, however, the ſame appearances of regard and confidence towards a ſon, whom he began to conſider as his moſt irreconcileable enemy. Medals were ſtruck with the cuſtomary vows for the long and auſpicious reign of the young Cæſar [13];

Diſgrace and death of Criſpus. A. D. 326, July.

[12] Cod. Theod. l. ix. tit. iv. Godefroy ſuſpected the ſecret motives of this law. Comment. tom. iii. p. 9.

[13] Ducange Fam. Byzant. p. 28. Tillemont, tom. iv. p. 610.

and

CHAP. XVIII.

and as the people, who was not admitted into the ſecrets of the palace, ſtill loved his virtues, and reſpected his dignity, a poet who ſolicits his recal from exile, adores with equal devotion the majeſty of the father and that of the ſon [14]. The time was now arrived for celebrating the auguſt ceremony of the twentieth year of the reign of Conſtantine; and the emperor, for that purpoſe, removed his court from Nicomedia to Rome, where the moſt ſplendid preparations had been made for his reception. Every eye, and every tongue, affected to expreſs their ſenſe of the general happineſs, and the veil of ceremony and diſſimulation was drawn for a while over the darkeſt deſigns of revenge and murder [15]. In the midſt of the feſtival, the unfortunate Criſpus was apprehended by order of the emperor, who laid aſide the tenderneſs of a father, without aſſuming the equity of a judge. The examination was ſhort and private [16]; and as it was thought decent to conceal the fate of the young prince from the eyes of the Roman people, he was ſent under a

[14] His name was Porphyrius Optatianus. The date of his panegyric, written according to the taſte of the age in vile acroſtics, is ſettled by Scaliger ad Euſeb. p. 250. Tillemont, tom. iv. p. 607. and Fabricius Biblioth. Latin. l. iv. c. 1.

[15] Zoſim. l. ii. p. 103. Godefroy Chronol. Legum, p. 28.

[16] Ἀκριτος, *without a trial*, is the ſtrong, and moſt probably the juſt expreſſion of Suidas. The elder Victor, who wrote under the next reign, ſpeaks with becoming caution. "Natû grandior incertum quâ causâ, patris judicio occidiſſet." If we conſult the ſucceeding writers, Eutropius, the younger Victor, Oroſius, Jerom, Zoſimus, Philoſtorgius, and Gregory of Tours; their knowledge will appear gradually to increaſe, as their means of information muſt have diminiſhed; a circumſtance which frequently occurs in hiſtorical diſquiſition.

3 ſtrong

ſtrong guard to Pola, in Iſtria, where, ſoon afterwards, he was put to death, either by the hand of the executioner, or by the more gentle operation of poiſon[17]. The Cæſar Licinius, a youth of amiable manners, was involved in the ruin of Criſpus[18]; and the ſtern jealouſy of Conſtantine was unmoved by the prayers and tears of his favourite ſiſter, pleading for the life of a ſon; whoſe rank was his only crime, and whoſe loſs ſhe did not long ſurvive. The ſtory of theſe unhappy princes, the nature and evidence of their guilt, the forms of their trial, and the circumſtances of their death, were buried in myſterious obſcurity; and the courtly biſhop, who has celebrated in an elaborate work the virtues and piety of his hero, obſerves a prudent ſilence on the ſubject of theſe tragic events[19]. Such haughty contempt for the opinion of mankind, whilſt it imprints an indelible ſtain on the memory of Conſtantine, muſt remind us of the very different behaviour of one of

[17] Ammianus (l. xiv. c. 11.) uſes the general expreſſion of *peremptum*. Codinus (p. 34.) beheads the young prince; but Sidonius Apollinaris (Epiſtol. v. 8.), for the ſake perhaps of an antitheſis to Fauſta's *warm* bath, chooſes to adminiſter a draught of *cold* poiſon.

[18] Sororis filium, commodæ indolis juvenem. Eutropius, x. 6. May I not be permitted to conjecture, that Criſpus had married Helena, the daughter of the emperor Licinius, and that on the happy delivery of the princeſs, in the year 322, a general pardon was granted by Conſtantine? See Ducange Fam. Byzant. p. 47. and the law (l. ix. tit. xxxvii.) of the Theodoſian Code, which has ſo much embarraſſed the interpreters. Godefroy, tom. iii. p. 267.

[19] See the life of Conſtantine, particularly l. ii. c. 19, 20. Two hundred and fifty years afterwards Evagrius (l. iii. c. 41.) deduced from the ſilence of Euſebius a vain argument againſt the reality of the fact.

the

CHAP. XVIII.

the greateſt monarchs of the preſent age. The Czar Peter, in the full poſſeſſion of deſpotic power, ſubmitted to the judgment of Ruſſia, of Europe, and of poſterity; the reaſons which had compelled him to ſubſcribe the condemnation of a criminal, or at leaſt of a degenerate, ſon [20].

The empreſs Fauſta.

The innocence of Criſpus was ſo univerſally acknowledged, that the modern Greeks, who adore the memory of their founder, are reduced to palliate the guilt of a parricide, which the common feelings of human nature forbade them to juſtify. They pretend, that as ſoon as the afflicted father diſcovered the falſehood of the accuſation by which his credulity had been ſo fatally miſled, he publiſhed to the world his repentance and remorſe; that he mourned forty days, during which he abſtained from the uſe of the bath, and all the ordinary comforts of life; and that, for the laſting inſtruction of poſterity, he erected a golden ſtatue of Criſpus, with this memorable inſcription: TO MY SON, WHOM I UNJUSTLY CONDEMNED [21]. A tale ſo moral and ſo intereſting would deſerve to be ſupported by leſs exceptionable authority; but if we conſult the more ancient and authentic writers, they will inform us, that the repentance of Conſtantine was manifeſted only in acts of blood and revenge; and that he atoned for the murder of an innocent ſon, by the execution,

[20] Hiſtoire de Pierre le Grand, par Voltaire, part ii. c. x.

[21] In order to prove that the ſtatue was erected by Conſtantine, and afterwards concealed by the malice of the Arians, Codinus very readily creates (p. 34.) two witneſſes, Hippolitus, and the younger Herodotus, to whoſe imaginary hiſtories he appeals with unbluſhing confidence.

perhaps

CHAP. XVIII.

perhaps, of a guilty wife. They aſcribe the misfortunes of Criſpus to the arts of his ſtep-mother Fauſta, whoſe implacable hatred, or whoſe diſappointed love, renewed in the palace of Conſtantine the ancient tragedy of Hippolitus and of Phædra [22]. Like the daughter of Minos, the daughter of Maximian accuſed her ſon-in-law of an inceſtuous attempt on the chaſtity of his father's wife; and eaſily obtained, from the jealouſy of the emperor, a ſentence of death againſt a young prince, whom ſhe conſidered with reaſon as the moſt formidable rival of her own children. But Helena, the aged mother of Conſtantine, lamented and revenged the untimely fate of her grandſon Criſpus: nor was it long before a real or pretended diſcovery was made, that Fauſta herſelf entertained a criminal connection with a ſlave belonging to the Imperial ſtables [23]. Her condemnation and puniſhment were the inſtant conſequences of the charge; and the adultereſs was ſuffocated by the ſteam of a bath, which, for that purpoſe, had been heated to an extraordinary degree [24]. By ſome it will perhaps be thought,

[22] Zoſimus (l. ii. p. 103.) may be conſidered as our original. The ingenuity of the moderns, aſſiſted by a few hints from the ancients, has illuſtrated and improved his obſcure and imperfect narrative.

[23] Philoſtorgius, l. ii. c. 4. Zoſimus (l. ii. p. 104. 116.) imputes to Conſtantine the death of two wives, of the innocent Fauſta, and of an adultereſs who was the mother of his three ſucceſſors. According to Jerom, three or four years elapſed between the death of Criſpus and that of Fauſta. The elder Victor is prudently ſilent.

[24] If Fauſta was put to death, it is reaſonable to believe that the private apartments of the palace were the ſcene of her execution.

CHAP. XVIII.

thought, that the remembrance of a conjugal union of twenty years, and the honour of their common offspring, the deſtined heirs of the throne, might have ſoftened the obdurate heart of Conſtantine; and perſuaded him to ſuffer his wife, however guilty ſhe might appear, to expiate her offences in a ſolitary priſon. But it ſeems a ſuperfluous labour to weigh the propriety, unleſs we could aſcertain the truth, of this ſingular event; which is attended with ſome circumſtances of doubt and perplexity. Thoſe who have attacked, and thoſe who have defended, the character of Conſtantine, have alike diſregarded two very remarkable paſſages of two orations pronounced under the ſucceeding reign. The former celebrates the virtues, the beauty, and the fortune of the empreſs Fauſta, the daughter, wife, ſiſter, and mother of ſo many princes [25]. The latter aſſerts, in explicit terms, that the mother of the younger Conſtantine, who was ſlain three years after his father's death, ſurvived to weep over the fate of her ſon [26]. Notwithſtanding the poſitive teſtimony of ſeveral writers of the Pagan

The orator Chryſoſtom indulges his fancy by expoſing the naked empreſs on a deſert mountain, to be devoured by wild beaſts.

[25] Julian. Orat. i. He ſeems to call her the mother of Criſpus. She might aſſume that title by adoption. At leaſt, ſhe was not conſidered as his mortal enemy. Julian compares the fortune of Fauſta with that of Paryſatis, the Perſian queen. A Roman would have more naturally recollected the ſecond Agrippina:

Et moi, qui ſur le trone ai ſuivi mes ancêtres;
Moi, fille, femme, ſœur et mere de vos maitres.

[26] Monod. in Conſtantin. Jun. c. 4. ad Calcem Eutrop. edit. Havercamp. The orator ſtyles her the moſt divine and pious of queens.

CHAP. XVIII.

as well as of the Chriſtian religion, there may ſtill remain ſome reaſon to believe, or at leaſt to ſuſpect, that Fauſta eſcaped the blind and ſuſpicious cruelty of her huſband. The deaths of a ſon, and of a nephew, with the execution of a great number of reſpectable, and perhaps innocent friends [27], who were involved in their fall, may be ſufficient, however, to juſtify the diſcontent of the Roman people, and to explain the ſatirical verſes affixed to the palace-gate, comparing the ſplendid and bloody reigns of Conſtantine and Nero [28].

The ſons and nephews of Conſtantine.

By the death of Criſpus, the inheritance of the empire ſeemed to devolve on the three ſons of Fauſta, who have been already mentioned under the names of Conſtantine, of Conſtantius, and of Conſtans. Theſe young princes were ſucceſſively inveſted with the title of Cæſar; and the dates of their promotion may be referred to the tenth, the twentieth, and the thirtieth years of the reign of their father [29]. This conduct, though it tended to multiply the future maſters of the Roman world, might be excuſed by the partiality of paternal affection; but it is not eaſy to underſtand

[27] Interfecit numeroſos amicos. Eutrop. xx. 6.

[28] Saturni aurea ſæcula quis requirat?
Sunt hæc gemmea, ſed Neroniana.
Sidon. Appollinar. v. 8.
It is ſomewhat ſingular, that theſe ſatirical lines ſhould be attributed, not to an obſcure libeller, or a diſappointed patriot, but to Ablavius, prime miniſter and favourite of the emperor. We may now perceive that the imprecations of the Roman people were dictated by humanity, as well as by ſuperſtition. Zoſim. l. ii. p. 105.

[29] Euſeb. Orat. in Conſtantin. c. 3. Theſe dates are ſufficiently correct to juſtify the orator.

CHAP. XVIII.

the motives of the emperor, when he endangered the safety both of his family and of his people, by the unnecessary elevation of his two nephews, Dalmatius and Hannibalianus. The former was raised, by the title of Cæsar, to an equality with his cousins. In favour of the latter, Constantine invented the new and singular appellation of *Nobilissimus* [30]; to which he annexed the flattering distinction of a robe of purple and gold. But of the whole series of Roman princes in any age of the empire, Hannibalianus alone was distinguished by the title of KING; a name which the subjects of Tiberius would have detested, as the profane and cruel insult of capricious tyranny. The use of such a title, even as it appears under the reign of Constantine, is a strange and unconnected fact, which can scarcely be admitted on the joint authority of Imperial medals and contemporary writers [31].

Their education.

The whole empire was deeply interested in the education of these five youths, the acknowledged successors of Constantine. The exercises of the body prepared them for the fatigues of war, and the duties of active life. Those who occasionally mention the education or talents of Constantius, allow that he excelled in the gymnastic arts of

[30] Zosim. l. ii. p. 117. Under the predecessors of Constantine, *Nobilissimus* was a vague epithet, rather than a legal and determined title.

[31] Adstruunt nummi veteres ac singulares. Spanheim de Usu Numismat. Dissertat. xii. vol. ii. p. 357. Ammianus speaks of this Roman king (l. xiv. c. 1. and Valesius ad loc.) The Valesian fragment styles him King of kings; and the Paschal Chronicle (p. 286.), by employing the word Ρηγας, acquires the weight of Latin evidence.

leaping

CHAP. XVIII.

leaping and running; that he was a dexterous archer, a ſkilful horſeman, and a maſter of all the different weapons uſed in the ſervice either of the cavalry or of the infantry [32]. The ſame aſſiduous cultivation was beſtowed, though not perhaps with equal ſucceſs, to improve the minds of the ſons and nephews of Conſtantine [33]. The moſt celebrated profeſſors of the Chriſtian faith, of the Grecian philoſophy, and of the Roman juriſprudence, were invited by the liberality of the emperor, who reſerved for himſelf the important taſk of inſtructing the royal youths in the ſcience of government, and the knowledge of mankind. But the genius of Conſtantine himſelf had been formed by adverſity and experience. In the free intercourſe of private life, and amidſt the dangers of the court of Galerius, he had learned to command his own paſſions, to encounter thoſe of his equals, and to depend for his preſent ſafety and future greatneſs on the prudence and firmneſs of his perſonal conduct. His deſtined ſucceſſors had the misfortune of being born and educated in the Imperial purple. Inceſſantly ſurrounded with a train of flatterers, they paſſed their youth in the enjoyment of luxury and the expectation of a throne; nor would the dignity of their rank per-

[32] His dexterity in martial exerciſe is celebrated by Julian (Orat. i. p. 11. Orat. ii. p. 53.), and allowed by Ammianus (l. xxi. c. 16.).

[33] Euſeb. in Vit. Conſtantin. l. iv. c. 51. Julian. Orat. i. p. 11—16. with Spanheim's elaborate Commentary. Libanius, Orat. iii. p. 109. Conſtantius ſtudied with laudable diligence; but the dulneſs of his fancy prevented him from ſucceeding in the art of poetry, or even of rhetoric.

CHAP. XVIII.

mit them to deſcend from that elevated ſtation from whence the various characters of human nature appear to wear a ſmooth and uniform aſpect. The indulgence of Conſtantine admitted them, at a very tender age, to ſhare the adminiſtration of the empire; and they ſtudied the art of reigning at the expence of the people entruſted to their care. The younger Conſtantine was appointed to hold his court in Gaul; and his brother Conſtantius exchanged that department, the ancient patrimony of their father, for the more opulent, but leſs martial, countries of the Eaſt. Italy, the Weſtern Illyricum, and Africa, were accuſtomed to revere Conſtans, the third of his ſons, as the repreſentative of the great Conſtantine. He fixed Dalmatius on the Gothic frontier, to which he annexed the government of Thrace, Macedonia, and Greece. The city of Cæſarea was choſen for the reſidence of Hannibalianus; and the provinces of Pontus, Cappadocia, and the Leſſer Armenia, were deſtined to form the extent of his new kingdom. For each of theſe princes a ſuitable eſtabliſhment was provided. A juſt proportion of guards, of legions, and of auxiliaries, was allotted for their reſpective dignity and defence. The miniſters and generals, who were placed about their perſons, were ſuch as Conſtantine could truſt to aſſiſt, and even to controul, theſe youthful ſovereigns in the exerciſe of their delegated power. As they advanced in years and experience, the limits of their authority were inſenſibly enlarged: but the emperor always reſerved for himſelf the title of Auguſtus; and

and while he ſhewed the *Cæſars* to the armies and provinces, he maintained every part of the empire in equal obedience to its ſupreme head [34]. The tranquillity of the laſt fourteen years of his reign was ſcarcely interrupted by the contemptible inſurrection of a camel-driver in the iſland of Cyprus [35], or by the active part which the policy of Conſtantine engaged him to aſſume in the wars of the Goths and Sarmatians.

Manners of the Sarmatians.

Among the different branches of the human race, the Sarmatians form a very remarkable ſhade; as they ſeem to unite the manners of the Aſiatic barbarians with the figure and complexion of the ancient inhabitants of Europe. According to the various accidents of peace and war, of alliance or conqueſt, the Sarmatians were ſometimes confined to the banks of the Tanais; and they ſometimes ſpread themſelves over the immenſe plains which lie between the Viſtula and the Volga [36]. The care of their numerous flocks and herds, the purſuit of game, and the exerciſe of war, or rather of rapine, directed the vagrant

[34] Euſebius (l. iv. c. 51, 52.), with a deſign of exalting the authority and glory of Conſtantine, affirms, that he divided the Roman empire as a private citizen might have divided his patrimony. His diſtribution of the provinces may be collected from Eutropius, the two Victors, and the Valeſian fragment.

[35] Calocerus, the obſcure leader of this rebellion, or rather tumult, was apprehended and burnt alive in the market-place of Tarſus, by the vigilance of Dalmatius. See the elder Victor, the Chronicle of Jerom, and the doubtful traditions of Theophanes and Cedrenus.

[36] Cellarius has collected the opinions of the ancients concerning the European and Aſiatic Sarmatia; and M. d'Anville has applied them to modern geography with the ſkill and accuracy which always diſtinguiſh that excellent writer.

CHAP. XVIII.

motions of the Sarmatians. The moveable camps or cities, the ordinary reſidence of their wives and children, conſiſted only of large waggons drawn by oxen, and covered in the form of tents. The military ſtrength of the nation was compoſed of cavalry; and the cuſtom of their warriors, to lead in their hand one or two ſpare horſes, enabled them to advance and to retreat with a rapid diligence, which ſurpriſed the ſecurity, and eluded the purſuit, of a diſtant enemy [37]. Their poverty of iron prompted their rude induſtry to invent a ſort of cuiraſs, which was capable of reſiſting a ſword or javelin, though it was formed only of horſes hoofs, cut into thin and poliſhed ſlices, carefully laid over each other in the manner of ſcales or feathers, and ſtrongly ſewed upon an under-garment of coarſe linen [38]. The offenſive arms of the Sarmatians were ſhort daggers, long lances, and a weighty bow with a quiver of arrows. They were reduced to the neceſſity of employing fiſh bones for the points of their weapons; but the cuſtom of dipping them in a venomous liquor, that poiſoned the wounds which they inflicted, is alone ſufficient to prove the moſt ſavage manners; ſince a people impreſſed with a ſenſe of humanity would have abhorred ſo cruel a practice, and a nation ſkilled in the arts of war would have diſdained ſo impotent a re-

[37] Ammian. l. xvii. c. 12. The Sarmatian horſes were caſtrated, to prevent the miſchievous accidents which might happen from the noiſy and ungovernable paſſions of the males.

[38] Pauſanias, l. i. p. 50. edit. Kuhn. That inquiſitive traveller had carefully examined a Sarmatian cuiraſs, which was preſerved in the temple of Æſculapius at Athens.

ſource.

fource [39]. Whenever theſe Barbarians iſſued from their deſerts in queſt of prey, their ſhaggy beards, uncombed locks, the furs with which they were covered from head to foot, and their fierce countenances, which ſeemed to expreſs the innate cruelty of their minds, inſpired the more civilized provincials of Rome with horror and diſmay.

Their ſettlement near the Danube.

The tender Ovid, after a youth ſpent in the enjoyment of fame and luxury, was condemned to an hopeleſs exile on the frozen banks of the Danube, where he was expoſed, almoſt without defence, to the fury of theſe monſters of the deſert, with whoſe ſtern ſpirits he feared that his gentle ſhade might hereafter be confounded. In his pathetic, but ſometimes unmanly lamentations [40], he deſcribes, in the moſt lively colours, the dreſs and manners, the arms and inroads of the Getæ

[39] Aſpicis et mitti ſub adunco toxica ferro,
Et telum cauſas mortis habere duas.
Ovid. ex Ponto, l. iv. ep. 7. ver. 7.
See in the Recherches ſur les Americains, tom. ii. p. 236—271, a very curious diſſertation on poiſoned darts. The venom was commonly extracted from the vegetable reign; but that employed by the Scythians appears to have been drawn from the viper, and a mixture of human blood. The uſe of poiſoned arms, which has been ſpread over both worlds, never preſerved a ſavage tribe from the arms of a diſciplined enemy.

[40] The nine books of Poetical Epiſtles, which Ovid compoſed during the ſeven firſt years of his melancholy exile, poſſeſs, beſides the merit of elegance, a double value. They exhibit a picture of the human mind under very ſingular circumſtances; and they contain many curious obſervations, which no Roman, except Ovid, could have an opportunity of making. Every circumſtance which tends to illuſtrate the hiſtory of the Barbarians, has been drawn together by the very accurate Count de Buat. Hiſt. Ancienne des Peuples de l'Europe, tom. iv. c. xvi. p. 286—319.

and

CHAP. XVIII.

and Sarmatians, who were aſſociated for the purpoſes of deſtruction; and from the accounts of hiſtory, there is ſome reaſon to believe that theſe Sarmatians were the Jazygæ, one of the moſt numerous and warlike tribes of the nation. The allurements of plenty engaged them to ſeek a permanent eſtabliſhment on the frontiers of the empire. Soon after the reign of Auguſtus, they obliged the Dacians, who ſubſiſted by fiſhing on the banks of the river Teyſs or Tibiſcus, to retire into the hilly country, and to abandon to the victorious Sarmatians the fertile plains of the Upper Hungary, which are bounded by the courſe of the Danube and the ſemi-circular incloſure of the Carpathian mountains[41]. In this advantageous poſition, they watched or ſuſpended the moment of attack, as they were provoked by injuries or appeaſed by preſents; they gradually acquired the ſkill of uſing more dangerous weapons; and although the Sarmatians did not illuſtrate their name by any memorable exploits, they occaſionally aſſiſted their eaſtern and weſtern neighbours, the Goths and the Germans, with a formidable body of cavalry. They lived under the irregular ariſtocracy of their chieftains[42]; but after they had received into their boſom the fugitive Van-

[41] The Sarmatians Jazygæ were ſettled on the banks of the Pathiſſus or Tibiſcus, when Pliny, in the year 79, publiſhed his Natural Hiſtory. See l. iv. c. 25. In the time of Strabo and Ovid, ſixty or ſeventy years before, they appear to have inhabited beyond the Getæ, along the coaſt of the Euxine.

[42] Principes Sarmatarum Jazygum penes quos civitatis regimen . . . plebem quoque et vim equitum quâ ſolâ valent offerebant. Tacit. Hiſt. iii. 5. This offer was made in the civil war between Vitellius and Veſpaſian.

dals, who yielded to the preſſure of the Gothic power, they ſeem to have choſen a king from that nation, and from the illuſtrious race of the Aſtingi, who had formerly dwelt on the ſhores of the northern ocean [43].

CHAP. XVIII.

The Gothic war, A. D. 331.

This motive of enmity muſt have inflamed the ſubjects of contention, which perpetually ariſe on the confines of warlike and independent nations. The Vandal princes were ſtimulated by fear and revenge; the Gothic kings aſpired to extend their dominion from the Euxine to the frontiers of Germany; and the waters of the Maros, a ſmall river which falls into the Teyſs, were ſtained with the blood of the contending Barbarians. After ſome experience of the ſuperior ſtrength and number of their adverſaries, the Sarmatians implored the protection of the Roman monarch, who beheld with pleaſure the diſcord of the nations, but who was juſtly alarmed by the progreſs of the Gothic arms. As ſoon as Conſtantine had declared himſelf in favour of the weaker party, the haughty Araric, king of the Goths, inſtead of expecting the attack of the Legions, boldly paſſed the Danube, and ſpread terror and devaſtation through the province of Mæſia. To oppoſe the inroad of this deſtroying hoſt, the aged emperor took the field in perſon; but on this occaſion either his conduct or his fortune betrayed the glory which he had acquired in ſo many ſo-

[43] This hypotheſis of a Vandal king reigning over Sarmatian ſubjects, ſeems neceſſary to reconcile the Goth Jornandes with the Greek and Latin hiſtorians of Conſtantine. It may be obſerved that Iſidore, who lived in Spain under the dominion of the Goths, gives them for enemies, not the Vandals, but the Sarmatians. See his Chronicle in Grotius, p. 709.

reign

CHAP. XVIII.

reign and domeſtic wars. He had the mortification of ſeeing his troops fly before an inconſiderable detachment of the Barbarians, who purſued them to the edge of their fortified camp, and obliged him to conſult his ſafety by a precipitate and ignominious retreat. The event of a ſecond and more ſucceſsful action retrieved the honour of the Roman name; and the powers of art and diſcipline prevailed, after an obſtinate conteſt, over the efforts of irregular valour. The broken army of the Goths abandoned the field of battle, the waſted province, and the paſſage of the Danube: and although the eldeſt of the ſons of Conſtantine was permitted to ſupply the place of his father, the merit of the victory, which diffuſed univerſal joy, was aſcribed to the auſpicious counſels of the emperor himſelf.

A. D. 332, April 20.

He contributed at leaſt to improve this advantage, by his negociations with the free and warlike people of Cherſoneſus [44], whoſe capital, ſituate on the weſtern coaſt of the Tauric or Crimæan peninſula, ſtill retained ſome veſtiges of a Grecian colony, and was governed by a perpetual magiſtrate, aſſiſted by a council of ſenators, emphatically ſtyled the Fathers of the City. The Cher-

44 I may ſtand in need of ſome apology for having uſed, without ſcruple, the authority of Conſtantine Porphyrogenitus, in all that relates to the wars and negociations of the Cherſonites. I am aware that he was a Greek of the tenth century, and that his accounts of ancient hiſtory are frequently confuſed and fabulous. But on this occaſion his narrative is, for the moſt part, conſiſtent and probable; nor is there much difficulty in conceiving that an emperor might have acceſs to ſome ſecret archives, which had eſcaped the diligence of meaner hiſtorians. For the ſituation and hiſtory of Cherſone, ſee Peyſſonel des Peuples barbares qui ont habité les Bords du Danube, c. xvi. p. 84—90.

ſonites were animated againſt the Goths, by the memory of the wars, which, in the preceding century, they had maintained with unequal forces againſt the invaders of their country. They were connected with the Romans, by the mutual benefits of commerce; as they were ſupplied from the provinces of Aſia with corn and manufactures, which they purchaſed with their only productions, ſalt, wax, and hides. Obedient to the requiſition of Conſtantine, they prepared, under the conduct of their magiſtrate Diogenes, a conſiderable army, of which the principal ſtrength conſiſted in croſs-bows and military chariots. The ſpeedy march and intrepid attack of the Cherſonites, by diverting the attention of the Goths, aſſiſted the operations of the Imperial generals. The Goths, vanquiſhed on every ſide, were driven into the mountains, where, in the courſe of a ſevere campaign, above an hundred thouſand were computed to have periſhed by cold and hunger. Peace was at length granted to their humble ſupplications; the eldeſt ſon of Araric was accepted as the moſt valuable hoſtage; and Conſtantine endeavoured to convince their chiefs, by a liberal diſtribution of honours and rewards, how far the friendſhip of the Romans was preferable to their enmity. In the expreſſions of his gratitude towards the faithful Cherſonites, the emperor was ſtill more magnificent. The pride of the nation was gratified by the ſplendid and almoſt royal decorations beſtowed on their magiſtrate and his ſucceſſors. A perpetual exemption from all duties was ſtipulated for their veſſels which traded to the ports of the Black Sea. A regular ſubſidy was promiſed, of iron,

CHAP. XVIII.

iron, corn, oil, and of every ſupply which could be uſeful either in peace or war. But it was thought that the Sarmatians were ſufficiently rewarded by their deliverance from impending ruin; and the emperor, perhaps with too ſtrict an œconomy, deducted ſome part of the expences of the war from the cuſtomary gratifications which were allowed to that turbulent nation.

Expulſion of the Sarmatians, A. D. 334.

Exaſperated by this apparent neglect, the Sarmatians ſoon forgot, with the levity of Barbarians, the ſervices which they had ſo lately received, and the dangers which ſtill threatened their ſafety. Their inroads on the territory of the empire provoked the indignation of Conſtantine, to leave them to their fate, and he no longer oppoſed the ambition of Geberic, a renowned warrior, who had recently aſcended the Gothic throne. Wiſumar, the Vandal king, whilſt alone, and unaſſiſted, he defended his dominions with undaunted courage, was vanquiſhed and ſlain in a deciſive battle, which ſwept away the flower of the Sarmatian youth. The remainder of the nation embraced the deſperate expedient of arming their ſlaves, a hardy race of hunters and herdſmen, by whoſe tumultuary aid, they revenged their defeat, and expelled the invader from their confines. But they ſoon diſcovered that they had exchanged a foreign for a domeſtic enemy, more dangerous and more implacable. Enraged by their former ſervitude, elated by their preſent glory, the ſlaves, under the name of Limigantes, claimed and uſurped the poſſeſſion of the country which they had ſaved. Their maſters, unable to withſtand the ungoverned fury of the populace, preferred the

CHAP. XVIII.

the hardſhips of exile, to the tyranny of their ſervants. Some of the fugitive Sarmatians ſolicited a leſs ignominious dependence, under the hoſtile ſtandard of the Goths. A more numerous band retired beyond the Carpathian mountains, among the Quadi, their German allies, and were eaſily admitted to ſhare a ſuperfluous waſte of uncultivated land. But the far greater part of the diſtreſſed nation turned their eyes towards the fruitful provinces of Rome. Imploring the protection and forgiveneſs of the emperor, they ſolemnly promiſed, as ſubjects in peace, and as ſoldiers in war, the moſt inviolable fidelity to the empire which ſhould graciouſly receive them into its boſom. According to the maxims adopted by Probus and his ſucceſſors, the offers of this Barbarian colony were eagerly accepted; and a competent portion of lands in the provinces of Pannonia, Thrace, Macedonia, and Italy, were immediately aſſigned for the habitation and ſubſiſtence of three hundred thouſand Sarmatians [45].

Death and funeral of Conſtantine, A. D. 337, July 25.

By chaſtiſing the pride of the Goths, and by accepting the homage of a ſuppliant nation, Con-

45 The Gothic and Sarmatian wars are related in ſo broken and imperfect a manner, that I have been obliged to compare the following writers, who mutually ſupply, correct, and illuſtrate each other. Thoſe who will take the ſame trouble, may acquire a right of criticiſing my narrative. Ammianus, l. xvii. c. 12. Anonym. Valeſian. p. 715. Eutropius, x. 7. Sextus Rufus de Provinciis, c. 26. Julian. Orat. i. p. 9. and Spanheim Comment. p. 94. Hieronym. in Chron. Euſeb. in Vit. Conſtantin. l. iv. c. 6. Socrates, l. i. c. 18. Sozomen, l. i. c. 8. Zoſimus, l. ii. p. 108. Jornandes de Reb. Geticis, c. 22. Iſidorus in Chron. p. 709; in Hiſt. Gothorum Grotii. Conſtantin. Porphyrogenitus de Adminiſtrat. Imperii, c. 53. p. 208. edit. Meurſii.

ſtantine

CHAP. XVIII.

ſtantine aſſerted the majeſty of the Roman empire; and the ambaſſadors of Æthiopia, Perſia, and the moſt remote countries of India, congratulated the peace and proſperity of his government[46]. If he reckoned, among the favours of fortune, the death of his eldeſt ſon, of his nephew, and perhaps of his wife, he enjoyed an uninterrupted flow of private as well as public felicity, till the thirtieth year of his reign; a period which none of his predeceſſors, ſince Auguſtus, had been permitted to celebrate. Conſtantine ſurvived that ſolemn feſtival about ten months; and, at the mature age of ſixty-four, after a ſhort illneſs, he ended his memorable life at the palace of Aquyrion, in the ſuburbs of Nicomedia, whither he had retired for the benefit of the air, and with the hope of recruiting his exhauſted ſtrength by the uſe of the warm baths. The exceſſive demonſtrations of grief, or at leaſt of mourning, ſurpaſſed whatever had been practiſed on any former occaſion. Notwithſtanding the claims of the ſenate and people of ancient Rome, the corpſe of the deceaſed emperor, according to his laſt requeſt, was tranſported to the city, which was deſtined to preſerve the name and memory of its founder. The body of Conſtantine, adorned with the vain ſymbols of greatneſs, the purple and

A. D. 337, May 22.

[46] Euſebius (in Vit. Conſt. l. iv. c. 50.) remarks three circumſtances relative to theſe Indians. 1. They came from the ſhores of the eaſtern ocean; a deſcription which might be applied to the coaſt of China or Coromandel. 2. They preſented ſhining gems, and unknown animals. 3. They proteſted their kings had erected ſtatues to repreſent the ſupreme majeſty of Conſtantine.

diadem,

diadem, was depoſited on a golden bed in one of the apartments of the palace, which for that purpoſe had been ſplendidly furniſhed and illuminated. The forms of the court were ſtrictly maintained. Every day, at the appointed hours, the principal officers of the ſtate, the army, and the houſehold, approaching the perſon of their ſovereign with bended knees and a compoſed countenance, offered their reſpectful homage as ſeriouſly as if he had been ſtill alive. From motives of policy, this theatrical repreſentation was for ſome time continued; nor could flattery neglect the opportunity of remarking that Conſtantine alone, by the peculiar indulgence of heaven, had reigned after his death [47]. CHAP. XVIII.

But this reign could ſubſiſt only in empty pageantry; and it was ſoon diſcovered that the will of the moſt abſolute monarch is ſeldom obeyed, when his ſubjects have no longer any thing to hope from his favour, or to dread from his reſentment. The ſame miniſters and generals who bowed with ſuch reverential awe before the inanimate corpſe of their deceaſed ſovereign, were engaged in ſecret conſultations to exclude his two nephews, Dalmatius and Hannibalianus, from the ſhare which he had aſſigned them in the ſucceſſion of the empire. We are too imperfectly acquaint- Factions of the court.

47 Funus relatum in urbem ſui nominis, quod ſane P. R. ægerrime tulit. Aurelius Victor. Conſtantine had prepared for himſelf a ſtately tomb in the church of the Holy Apoſtles. Euſeb. l. iv. c. 60. The beſt, and indeed almoſt the only account of the ſickneſs, death, and funeral of Conſtantine, is contained in the fourth book of his Life, by Euſebius.

CHAP. XVIII.

ed with the court of Conſtantine to form any judgment of the real motives which influenced the leaders of the conſpiracy; unleſs we ſhould ſuppoſe that they were actuated by a ſpirit of jealouſy and revenge againſt the præfect Ablavius, a proud favourite, who had long directed the counſels and abuſed the confidence of the late emperor. The arguments by which they ſolicited the concurrence of the ſoldiers and people, are of a more obvious nature: and they might with decency, as well as truth, inſiſt on the ſuperior rank of the children of Conſtantine, the danger of multiplying the number of ſovereigns, and the impending miſchiefs which threatened the republic, from the diſcord of ſo many rival princes, who were not connected by the tender ſympathy of fraternal affection. The intrigue was conducted with zeal and ſecrecy, till a loud and unanimous declaration was procured from the troops, that they would ſuffer none except the ſons of their lamented monarch, to reign over the Roman empire[43]. The younger Dalmatius, who was united with his collateral relations by the ties of friendſhip and intereſt, is allowed to have inherited a conſiderable ſhare of the abilities of the great Conſtantine: but, on this occaſion, he does not appear to have concerted any meaſures for ſupporting, by arms, the juſt claims which himſelf and his royal brother derived from the liberality of their uncle. Aſtoniſhed and overwhelmed by the tide of po-

[43] Euſebius (l. iv. c. 6.) terminates his narrative by this loyal declaration of the troops, and avoids all the invidious circumſtances of the ſubſequent maſſacre.

pular

pular fury, they ſeem to have remained, without the power of flight or of reſiſtance, in the hands of their implacable enemies. Their fate was ſuſpended till the arrival of Conſtantius, the ſecond [49], and perhaps the moſt favoured, of the ſons of Conſtantine.

Maſſacre of the princes.

The voice of the dying emperor had recommended the care of his funeral to the piety of Conſtantius; and that prince, by the vicinity of his eaſtern ſtation, could eaſily prevent the diligence of his brothers, who reſided in their diſtant government of Italy and Gaul. As ſoon as he had taken poſſeſſion of the palace of Conſtantinople, his firſt care was to remove the apprehenſions of his kinſmen by a ſolemn oath, which he pledged for their ſecurity. His next employment was to find ſome ſpecious pretence which might releaſe his conſcience from the obligation of an imprudent promiſe. The arts of fraud were made ſubſervient to the deſigns of cruelty; and a manifeſt forgery was atteſted by a perſon of the moſt ſacred character. From the hands of the biſhop of Nicomedia, Conſtantius received a fatal ſcroll, affirmed to be the genuine teſtament of his father; in which the emperor expreſſed his ſuſpicions that he had been poiſoned by his brothers; and conjured his ſons to revenge his death,

[49] The character of Dalmatius is advantageouſly, though concisely drawn by Eutropius (x. 9). Dalmatius Cæſar proſperrimâ indole, neque patruo abſimilis, *haud multo* poſt, oppreſſus eſt factione militari. As both Jerom and the Alexandrian Chronicle mention the third year of the Cæſar, which did not commence till the 18th or 24th of September, A. D. 337, it is certain that theſe military factions continued above four months.

CHAP. XVIII.

and to conſult their own ſafety by the puniſhment of the guilty [50]. Whatever reaſons might have been alleged by theſe unfortunate princes to defend their life and honour againſt ſo incredible an accuſation, they were ſilenced by the furious clamours of the ſoldiers, who declared themſelves, at once, their enemies, their judges, and their executioners. The ſpirit, and even the forms of legal proceedings were repeatedly violated in a promiſcuous maſſacre; which involved the two uncles of Conſtantius, ſeven of his couſins, of whom Dalmatius and Hannibalianus were the moſt illuſtrious, the Patrician Optatus, who had married a ſiſter of the late emperor, and the Præfect Ablavius, whoſe power and riches had inſpired him with ſome hopes of obtaining the purple. If it were neceſſary to aggravate the horrors of this bloody ſcene, we might add, that Conſtantius himſelf had eſpouſed the daughter of his uncle Julius, and that he had beſtowed his ſiſter in marriage on his couſin Hannibalianus. Theſe alliances, which the policy of Conſtantine, regardleſs of the public prejudice [51], had formed between

[50] I have related this ſingular anecdote on the authority of Philoſtorgius, l. ii. c. 16. But if ſuch a pretext was ever uſed by Conſtantine and his adherents, it was laid aſide with contempt, as ſoon as it had ſerved their immediate purpoſe. Athanaſius (tom. i. p. 856.) mentions the oath which Conſtantius had taken for the ſecurity of his kinſmen.

[51] Conjugia ſobrinarum diu ignorata, tempore addito percrebuiſſe. Tacit. Annal. xii. 6. and Lipſius ad loc. The repeal of the ancient law, and the practice of five hundred years, were inſufficient to eradicate the prejudices of the Romans; who ſtill conſidered the marriages of couſins-german, as a ſpecies of imperfect inceſt (Auguſtin de Civitate Dei, xv. 6.); and Julian whoſe mind was biaſſed by

between the ſeveral branches of the Imperial houſe, ſerved only to convince mankind, that theſe princes were as cold to the endearments of conjugal affection, as they were inſenſible to the ties of conſanguinity, and the moving entreaties of youth and innocence. Of ſo numerous a family, Gallus and Julian alone, the two youngeſt children of Julius Conſtantius, were ſaved from the hands of the aſſaſſins, till their rage, ſatiated with ſlaughter, had in ſome meaſure ſubſided. The emperor Conſtantius, who, in the abſence of his brothers, was the moſt obnoxious to guilt and reproach, diſcovered, on ſome future occaſions, a faint and tranſient remorſe for thoſe cruelties, which the perfidious councils of his miniſters, and the irreſiſtible violence of the troops, had extorted from his unexperienced youth [52].

Diviſion of the empire A. D. 337, Sept. 11.

The maſſacre of the Flavian race was ſucceeded by a new diviſion of the provinces; which was

by ſuperſtition and reſentment, ſtigmatizes theſe unnatural alliances between his own couſins with the opprobrious epithet of γαμων τε ου γαμων (Orat. vii. p. 228). The juriſprudence of the canons has ſince revived and enforced this prohibition, without being able to introduce it either into the civil or the common law of Europe. See on the ſubject of theſe marriages, Taylor's Civil Law, p. 331. Brouer de Jure Connub. l. ii. c. 12. Hericourt des Loix Eccleſiaſtiques, part iii. c. 5. Fleury Inſtitutions du Droit Canonique, tom. i. p. 331. Paris, 1767, and Fra Paolo Iſtoria del Concilio Trident. l. viii.

[52] Julian (ad S. P. Q. Athen. p. 270.) charges his couſin Conſtantius with the whole guilt of a maſſacre, from which he himſelf ſo narrowly eſcaped. His aſſertion is confirmed by Athanaſius, who, for reaſons of a very different nature, was not leſs an enemy of Conſtantius (tom. i. p. 856.). Zoſimus joins in the ſame accuſation. But the three abbreviators, Eutropius and the Victors, uſe very qualifying expreſſions; "ſinente potius quam jubente;" "incertum "quo fuaſore;" "vi militum."

CHAP. XVIII.

ratified in a perſonal interview of the three brothers. Conſtantine, the eldeſt of the Cæſars, obtained with a certain pre-eminence of rank, the poſſeſſion of the new capital, which bore his own name and that of his father. Thrace, and the countries of the eaſt, were allotted for the patrimony of Conſtantius; and Conſtans was acknowledged as the lawful ſovereign of Italy, Africa, and the weſtern Illyricum. The armies ſubmitted to their hereditary right; and they condeſcended, after ſome delay, to accept from the Roman ſenate, the title of *Auguſtus*. When they firſt aſſumed the reins of government, the eldeſt of theſe princes was twenty-one, the ſecond twenty, and the third only ſeventeen, years of age[53].

Sapor king of Perſia, A. D. 310.

While the martial nations of Europe followed the ſtandards of his brothers, Conſtantius, at the head of the effeminate troops of Aſia, was left to ſuſtain the weight of the Perſian war. At the deceaſe of Conſtantine, the throne of the eaſt was filled by Sapor, ſon of Hormouz, or Hormiſdas, and grandſon of Narſes, who, after the victory of Galerius, had humbly confeſſed the ſuperiority of the Roman power. Although Sapor was in the thirtieth year of his long reign, he was ſtill in the vigour of youth, as the date of his acceſſion, by a very ſtrange fatality, had preceded that of his birth. The wife of Hormouz remained pregnant at the time of her huſband's death; and the un-

[53] Euſeb. in Vit. Conſtantin. l. iv. c. 69. Zoſimus, l. ii. p. 117. Idat. in Chron. See two notes of Tillemont, Hiſt. des Empereurs, tom. iv. p. 1086—1091. The reign of the eldeſt brother at Conſtantinople is noticed only in the Alexandrian Chronicle.

certainty

certainty of the ſex, as well as of the event, excited the ambitious hopes of the princes of the houſe of Saſſan. The apprehenſions of civil war were at length removed, by the poſitive aſſurance of the Magi, that the widow of Hormouz had conceived, and would ſafely produce a ſon. Obedient to the voice of ſuperſtition, the Perſians prepared, without delay, the ceremony of his coronation. A royal bed, on which the queen lay in ſtate, was exhibited in the midſt of the palace; the diadem was placed on the ſpot, which might be ſuppoſed to conceal the future heir of Artaxerxes, and the proſtrate Satraps adored the majeſty of their inviſible and inſenſible ſovereign[54]. If any credit can be given to this marvellous tale, which ſeems however to be countenanced by the manners of the people, and by the extraordinary duration of his reign, we muſt admire not only the fortune, but the genius, of Sapor. In the ſoft ſequeſtered education of a Perſian haram, the royal youth could diſcover the importance of exerciſing the vigour of his mind and body; and, by his perſonal merit, deſerved a throne, on which he had been ſeated, while he was yet unconſcious of the duties and temptations of abſolute power. His minority was expoſed to the almoſt inevitable calamities of domeſtic diſcord; his capital was

[54] Agathias, who lived in the ſixth century, is the author of this ſtory (l. iv. p. 135. edit. Louvre). He derived his information from ſome extracts of the Perſian Chronicles, obtained and tranſlated by the interpreter Sergius, during his embaſſy at that court. The coronation of the mother of Sapor is likewiſe mentioned by Schikard (Tarikh. p. 116.) and d'Herbelot (Bibliotheque Orientale, p. 763.).

CHAP. XVIII.

surprised and plundered by Thair, a powerful king of Yemen, or Arabia; and the majesty of the royal family was degraded by the captivity of a princess, the sister of the deceased king. But as soon as Sapor attained the age of manhood, the presumptuous Thair, his nation, and his country, fell beneath the first effort of the young warrior; who used his victory with so judicious a mixture of rigour and clemency, that he obtained from the fears and gratitude of the Arabs, the title of *Dhoulacnaf*, or protector of the nation [55].

State of Mesopotamia and Armenia.

The ambition of the Persian, to whom his enemies ascribe the virtues of a soldier and a statesman, was animated by the desire of revenging the disgrace of his fathers, and of wresting from the hands of the Romans the five provinces beyond the Tigris. The military fame of Constantine, and the real or apparent strength of his government, suspended the attack; and while the hostile conduct of Sapor provoked the resentment, his artful negociations amused the patience of the Imperial court. The death of Constantine was the signal of war [56], and the actual condition of the Syrian and Armenian frontier, seemed to encourage the Persians by the prospect of a rich spoil, and an easy conquest. The example of the massacres of the palace, diffused a spirit of licen-

[55] D'Herbelot, Bibliotheque Orientale, p. 764.

[56] Sextus Rufus (c. 26.), who on this occasion is no contemptible authority, affirms, that the Persians sued in vain for peace, and that Constantine was preparing to march against them: yet the superior weight of the testimony of Eusebius, obliges us to admit the preliminaries, if not the ratification, of the treaty. See Tillemont, Hist. des Empereurs, tom. iv. p. 429.

tiousness

CHAP. XVIII.

ſtouſneſs and ſedition among the troops of the eaſt, who were no longer reſtrained by their habits of obedience to a veteran commander. By the prudence of Conſtantius, who, from the interview with his brothers in Pannonia, immediately haſtened to the banks of the Euphrates, the legions were gradually reſtored to a ſenſe of duty and diſcipline; but the ſeaſon of anarchy had permitted Sapor to form the ſiege of Niſibis, and to occupy ſeveral of the moſt important fortreſſes of Meſopotamia[67]. In Armenia, the renowned Tiridates had long enjoyed the peace and glory which he deſerved by his valour and fidelity to the cauſe of Rome. The firm alliance which he maintained with Conſtantine, was productive of ſpiritual as well as of temporal benefits; by the converſion of Tiridates, the character of a ſaint was applied to that of a hero, the Chriſtian faith was preached and eſtabliſhed from the Euphrates to the ſhores of the Caſpian, and Armenia was attached to the empire by the double ties of policy and of religion. But as many of the Armenian nobles ſtill refuſed to abandon the plurality of their gods and of their wives, the public tranquillity was diſturbed by a diſcontented faction, which inſulted the feeble age of their ſovereign, and impatiently expected the hour of his death. He died at length after a reign of A. D. 342. fifty-ſix years, and the fortune of the Armenian monarchy expired with Tiridates. His lawful heir was driven into exile, the Chriſtian prieſts

[67] Julian. Orat. i. p. 20.

were

CHAP. XVIII.

were either murdered or expelled from their churches, the barbarous tribes of Albania were ſolicited to deſcend from their mountains; and two of the moſt powerful governors uſurping the enſigns or the powers of royalty, implored the aſſiſtance of Sapor, and opened the gates of their cities to the Perſian garriſons. The Chriſtian party, under the guidance of the archbiſhop of Artaxata, the immediate ſucceſſor of St. Gregory the Illuminator, had recourſe to the piety of Conſtantius. After the troubles had continued about three years, Antiochus, one of the officers of the houſehold, executed with ſucceſs the Imperial commiſſion of reſtoring Choſroes, the ſon of Tiridates, to the throne of his fathers, of diſtributing honors and rewards among the faithful ſervants of the houſe of Arſaces, and of proclaiming a general amneſty, which was accepted by the greater part of the rebellious Satraps. But the Romans derived more honour than advantage from this revolution. Choſroes was a prince of a puny ſtature, and a puſillanimous ſpirit. Unequal to the fatigues of war, averſe to the ſociety of mankind, he withdrew from his capital to a retired palace, which he built on the banks of the river Eleutherus, and in the centre of a ſhady grove; where he conſumed his vacant hours in the rural ſports of hunting and hawking. To ſecure this inglorious eaſe, he ſubmitted to the conditions of peace which Sapor condeſcended to impoſe; the payment of an annual tribute, and the reſtitution of the fertile province of Atropatene, which the

courage

courage of Tiridates, and the victorious arms of Galerius, had annexed to the Armenian monarchy [58].

The Persian war, A. D. 337—360.

During the long period of the reign of Conſtantius, the provinces of the eaſt were afflicted by the calamities of the Perſian war. The irregular incurſions of the light troops alternately ſpread terror and devaſtation beyond the Tigris, and beyond the Euphrates, from the gates of Cteſiphon to thoſe of Antioch; and this active ſervice was performed by the Arabs of the deſert, who were divided in their intereſt and affections; ſome of their independent chiefs being enliſted in the party of Sapor, whilſt others had engaged their doubtful fidelity to the emperor [59]. The more grave and important operations of the war were conducted with equal vigour; and the armies of Rome and Perſia encountered each other in nine bloody fields, in two of which Conſtantius himſelf commanded in perſon [60]. The event of the

Battle of Singara, A. D. 348.

[58] Julian. Orat. i. p. 20, 21. Moſes of Chorene, l. ii. c. 89. l. iii. c. 1—9. p. 226—240. The perfect agreement between the vague hints of the contemporary orator, and the circumſtantial narrative of the national hiſtorian, gives light to the former, and weight to the latter. For the credit of Moſes it may be likewiſe obſerved, that the name of Antiochus is found a few years before in a civil office of inferior dignity. See Godefroy, Cod. Theod. tom. vi. p. 350.

[59] Ammianus (xiv. 4.) gives a lively deſcription of the wandering and prædatory life of the Saracens, who ſtretched from the confines of Aſſyria to the cataracts of the Nile. It appears from the adventures of Malchus, which Jerom has related in ſo entertaining a manner, that the high road between Beræa and Edeſſa was infeſted by theſe robbers. See Hieronym. tom. i. p. 256.

[60] We ſhall take from Eutropius the general idea of the war (x. 10.). A Perſis enim multa et gravia perpeſſus, ſæpe captis oppidis,

CHAP. XVIII.

the day was moſt commonly adverſe to the Romans, but in the battle of Singara, their imprudent valour had almoſt atchieved a ſignal and deciſive victory. The ſtationary troops of Singara retired on the approach of Sapor, who paſſed the Tigris over three bridges, and occupied near the village of Hilleh an advantageous camp, which, by the labour of his numerous pioneers, he ſurrounded in one day with a deep ditch, and a lofty rampart. His formidable hoſt, when it was drawn out in order of battle, covered the banks of the river, the adjacent heights, and the whole extent of a plain of above twelve miles, which ſeparated the two armies. Both were alike impatient to engage; but the Barbarians, after a ſlight reſiſtance, fled in diſorder; unable to reſiſt, or deſirous to weary, the ſtrength of the heavy legions, who, fainting with heat and thirſt, purſued them acroſs the plain, and cut in pieces a line of cavalry, clothed in complete armour, which had been poſted before the gates of the camp to protect their retreat. Conſtantius, who was hurried along in the purſuit, attempted, without effect, to reſtrain the ardour of his troops, by repreſenting to them the dangers of the approaching night,

pidis, obſeſſis urbibus, cæſis exercitibus, nullumque ei contra Saporem proſperum prælium fuit, niſi quod apud Singaram, &c. This honeſt account is confirmed by the hints of Ammianus, Rufus, and Jerom. The two firſt orations of Julian, and the third oration of Libanius, exhibit a more flattering picture; but the recantation of both thoſe orators, after the death of Conſtantius, while it reſtores us to the poſſeſſion of the truth, degrades their own character, and that of the emperor. The commentary of Spanheim on the firſt oration of Julian is profuſely learned. See likewiſe the judicious obſervations of Tillemont, Hiſt. des Empereurs, tom. iv. p. 656.

and

CHAP. XVIII.

and the certainty of completing their ſucceſs with the return of day. As they depended much more on their own valour, than on the experience or the abilities of their chief, they ſilenced by their clamours his timid remonſtrances; and ruſhing with fury to the charge, filled up the ditch, broke down the rampart, and diſperſed themſelves through the tents to recruit their exhauſted ſtrength, and to enjoy the rich harveſt of their labours. But the prudent Sapor had watched the moment of victory. His army, of which the greater part, ſecurely poſted on the heights, had been ſpectators of the action, advanced in ſilence, and under the ſhadow of the night; and his Perſian archers, guided by the illumination of the camp, poured a ſhower of arrows on a diſarmed and licentious crowd. The ſincerity of hiſtory [a] declares that the Romans were vanquiſhed with a dreadful ſlaughter, and that the flying remnant of the legions was expoſed to the moſt intolerable hardſhips. Even the tenderneſs of panegyric, confeſſing that the glory of the emperor was ſullied by the diſobedience of his ſoldiers, chuſes to draw a veil over the circumſtances of this melancholy retreat. Yet one of thoſe venal orators, ſo jealous of the fame of Conſtantius, relates with amazing coolneſs, an act of ſuch incredible cruelty, as, in the judgment of poſterity, muſt imprint a far deeper ſtain on the honour of the Imperial name. The ſon of Sapor, the heir of his crown,

[a] Acerrimâ nocturnâ concertatione pugnatum eſt, noſtrorum copiis ingenti ſtrage confoſſis. Ammian. xvili. 5. See likewiſe Eutropius, x. 10. and S. Rufus, c. 27.

had

CHAP. XVIII.

had been made a captive in the Perſian camp. The unhappy youth, who might have excited the compaſſion of the moſt ſavage enemy, was ſcourged, tortured, and publicly executed by the inhuman Romans [62].

Siege of Niſibis.

Whatever advantages might attend the arms of Sapor in the field, though nine repeated victories diffuſed among the nations the fame of his valour and conduct, he could not hope to ſucceed in the execution of his deſigns, while the fortified towns of Meſopotamia, and above all, the ſtrong and ancient city of Niſibis, remained in the poſſeſſion of the Romans. In the ſpace of twelve years, Niſibis, which ſince the time of Lucullus, had been deſervedly eſteemed the bulwark of the eaſt, ſuſtained three memorable ſieges againſt the power of Sapor; and the diſappointed monarch, after urging his attacks above ſixty, eighty, and an hundred days, was thrice repulſed with loſs and ignominy [63]. This large and populous city was ſituate about two days journey from the Tigris, in the midſt of a pleaſant and fertile plain at the foot of mount Maſius. A treble incloſure of brick walls was defended by a deep ditch [64]; and the

A. D. 338. 346. 350.

[62] Libanius, Orat. iii. p. 133. with Julian. Orat. i. p. 24. and Spanheim's Commentary, p. 179.

[63] See Julian. Orat. i. p. 27. Orat. ii. p. 62, &c. with the Commentary of Spanheim (p. 188—202.), who illuſtrates the circumſtances, and aſcertains the time of the three ſieges of Niſibis. Their dates are likewiſe examined by Tillemont (Hiſt. des Empereurs, tom. iv. p. 668. 671. 674.). Something is added from Zoſimus, l. iii. p. 151. and the Alexandrine Chronicle, p. 290.

[64] Salluſt. Fragment. lxxxiv. edit. Broſſes, and Plutarch in Lucull. tom. iii. p. 184. Niſibis is now reduced to one hundred and fifty houſes; the marſhy lands produce rice, and the fertile meadows, as

CHAP. XVIII.

the intrepid assistance of Count Lucilianus, and his garrison, was seconded by the desperate courage of the people. The citizens of Nisibis were animated by the exhortations of their bishop[65], inured to arms by the presence of danger, and convinced of the intentions of Sapor to plant a Persian colony in their room, and to lead them away into distant and barbarous captivity. The event of the two former sieges elated their confidence; and exasperated the haughty spirit of the Great King, who advanced a third time towards Nisibis, at the head of the united forces of Persia and India. The ordinary machines invented to batter or undermine the walls, were rendered ineffectual by the superior skill of the Romans; and many days had vainly elapsed, when Sapor embraced a resolution, worthy of an eastern monarch, who believed that the elements themselves were subject to his power. At the stated season of the melting of the snows in Armenia, the river Mygdonius, which divides the plain and the city of Nisibis, forms, like the Nile[66], an inundation

as far as Mosul and the Tigris, are covered with the ruins of towns and villages. See Niebuhr, Voyages, tom. ii. p. 300—309.

[65] The miracles which Theodoret (l. ii. c. 30.) ascribes to St. James, bishop of Edessa, were at least performed in a worthy cause, the defence of his country. He appeared on the walls under the figure of the Roman emperor, and sent an army of gnats to sting the trunks of the elephants, and to discomfit the host of the new Sennacherib.

[66] Julian Orat. i. p. 27. Though Niebuhr (tom. ii. p. 307.) allows a very considerable swell to the Mygdonius, over which he saw a bridge of *twelve* arches: it is difficult, however, to understand this parallel of a trifling rivulet with a mighty river. There are many circumstances obscure, and almost unintelligible, in the description of these stupendous water-works.

CHAP. XVIII.

over the adjacent country. By the labour of the Perſians, the courſe of the river was ſtopt below the town, and the waters were confined on every ſide by ſolid mounds of earth. On this artificial lake, a fleet of armed veſſels filled with ſoldiers, and with engines which diſcharged ſtones of five hundred pounds weight, advanced in order of battle, and engaged, almoſt upon a level, the troops which defended the ramparts. The irreſiſtible force of the waters was alternately fatal to the contending parties, till at length a portion of the walls, unable to ſuſtain the accumulated preſſure, gave way at once, and expoſed an ample breach of one hundred and fifty-feet. The Perſians were inſtantly driven to the aſſault, and the fate of Niſibis depended on the event of the day. The heavy-armed cavalry, who led the van of a deep column, were embarraſſed in the mud, and great numbers were drowned in the unſeen holes which had been filled by the ruſhing waters. The elephants, made furious by their wounds, encreaſed the diſorder, and trampled down thouſands of the Perſian archers. The Great King, who, from an exalted throne, beheld the misfortunes of his arms, ſounded, with reluctant indignation, the ſignal of the retreat, and ſuſpended for ſome hours the proſecution of the attack. But the vigilant citizens improved the opportunity of the night; and the return of day diſcovered a new wall of ſix feet in height, riſing every moment to fill up the interval of the breach. Notwithſtanding the diſappointment of his hopes, and the loſs of more than twenty thouſand men, Sapor ſtill preſſed the

reduction of Niſibis, with an obſtinate firmneſs, which could have yielded only to the neceſſity of defending the eaſtern provinces of Perſia againſt a formidable invaſion of the Maſſagetæ [67]. Alarmed by this intelligence, he haſtily relinquiſhed the ſiege, and marched with rapid diligence from the banks of the Tigris to thoſe of the Oxus. The danger and difficulties of the Scythian war engaged him ſoon afterwards to conclude, or at leaſt to obſerve, a truce with the Roman emperor, which was equally grateful to both princes; as Conſtantius himſelf, after the deaths of his two brothers, was involved, by the revolutions of the weſt, in a civil conteſt, which required and ſeemed to exceed the moſt vigorous exertion of his undivided ſtrength.

Civil war, and death of Conſtantine, A. D. 340. March.

After the partition of the empire, three years had ſcarcely elapſed before the ſons of Conſtantine ſeemed impatient to convince mankind that they were incapable of contenting themſelves with the dominions which they were unqualified to govern. The eldeſt of thoſe princes ſoon complained, that he was defrauded of his juſt proportion of the ſpoils of their murdered kinſmen; and though he might yield to the ſuperior guilt and merit of Conſtantius, he exacted from Conſtans, the ceſſion of the African provinces, as an equivalent for the rich countries of Macedonia and Greece, which his brother had acquired

67 We are obliged to Zonaras (tom. ii. l. xiii. p. 11.) for this invaſion of the Maſſagetæ, which is perfectly conſiſtent with the general ſeries of events, to which we are darkly led by the broken hiſtory of Ammianus.

CHAP. XVIII.

by the death of Dalmatius. The want of ſincerity, which Conſtantine experienced in a tedious and fruitleſs negociation, exaſperated the fierceneſs of his temper; and he eagerly liſtened to thoſe favourites, who ſuggeſted to him that his honour, as well as his intereſt, was concerned in the proſecution of the quarrel. At the head of a tumultuary band, ſuited for rapine rather than for conqueſt, he ſuddenly broke into the dominions of Conſtans, by the way of the Julian Alps, and the country round Aquileia felt the firſt effects of his reſentment. The meaſures of Conſtans, who then reſided in Dacia, were directed with more prudence and ability. On the news of his brother's invaſion, he detached a ſelect and diſciplined body of his Illyrian troops, propoſing to follow them in perſon, with the remainder of his forces. But the conduct of his lieutenants ſoon terminated the unnatural conteſt. By the artful appearances of flight, Conſtantine was betrayed into an ambuſcade, which had been concealed in a wood, where the raſh youth, with a few attendants, was ſurpriſed, ſurrounded, and ſlain. His body, after it had been found in the obſcure ſtream of the Alſa, obtained the honours of an Imperial ſepulchre; but his provinces tranſferred their allegiance to the conqueror, who, refuſing to admit his elder brother Conſtantius to any ſhare in theſe new acquiſitions, maintained the undiſputed poſſeſſion of more than two-thirds of the Roman empire [68].

The

[68] The cauſes and the events of this civil war are related with much perplexity and contradiction. I have chiefly followed Zonaras,

CHAP. XVIII.

Murder of Conſtans, A.D. 350, February.

The fate of Conſtans himſelf was delayed about ten years longer, and the revenge of his brother's death was reſerved for the more ignoble hand of a domeſtic traitor. The pernicious tendency of the ſyſtem introduced by Conſtantine was diſplayed in the feeble adminiſtration of his ſons; who, by their vices and weakneſs, ſoon loſt the eſteem and affections of their people. The pride aſſumed by Conſtans, from the unmerited ſucceſs of his arms, was rendered more contemptible by his want of abilities and application. His fond partiality towards ſome German captives, diſtinguiſhed only by the charms of youth, was an object of ſcandal to the people [69]; and Magnentius, an ambitious ſoldier, who was himſelf of Barbarian extraction, was encouraged by the public diſcontent to aſſert the honour of the Roman name [70]. The choſen bands of Jovians and Herculians, who acknowledged Magnentius as their leader, maintained the moſt reſpectable and important

naras, and the younger Victor. The monody (ad calcem Eutrop. edit. Havercamp.) pronounced on the death of Conſtantine, might have been very inſtructive; but prudence and falſe taſte engaged the orator to involve himſelf in vague declamation.

[69] Quarum (*gentium*) obſides pretio quæſitos pueros venuſtiores, quod cultius habuerat, libidine hujuſmodi arſiſſe *pro certo* habetur. Had not the depraved taſte of Conſtans been publicly avowed, the elder Victor, who held a conſiderable office in his brother's reign, would not have aſſerted it in ſuch poſitive terms.

[70] Julian. Orat. i. and ii. Zoſim. l. ii. p. 134. Victor in Epitome. There is reaſon to believe that Magnentius was born in one of thoſe Barbarian Colonies which Conſtantius Chlorus had eſtabliſhed in Gaul (ſee this Hiſtory, vol. ii. p. 132.). His behaviour may remind us of the patriot earl of Leiceſter, the famous Simon de Montfort, who could perſuade the good people of England, that he, a Frenchman by birth, had taken arms to deliver them from foreign favourites.

CHAP. XVIII.

ſtation in the Imperial camp. The friendſhip of Marcellinus, count of the ſacred largeſſes, ſupplied with a liberal hand the means of ſeduction. The ſoldiers were convinced by the moſt ſpecious arguments, that the republic ſummoned them to break the bonds of hereditary ſervitude; and, by the choice of an active and vigilant prince, to reward the ſame virtues which had raiſed the anceſtors of the degenerate Conſtans from a private condition to the throne of the world. As ſoon as the conſpiracy was ripe for execution, Marcellinus, under the pretence of celebrating his ſon's birth-day, gave a ſplendid entertainment to the *illuſtrious* and *honourable* perſons of the court of Gaul, which then reſided in the city of Autun. The intemperance of the feaſt was artfully protracted till a very late hour of the night; and the unſuſpecting gueſts were tempted to indulge themſelves in a dangerous and guilty freedom of converſation. On a ſudden the doors were thrown open, and Magnentius, who had retired for a few moments, returned into the apartment, inveſted with the diadem and purple. The conſpirators inſtantly ſaluted him with the titles of Auguſtus and Emperor. The ſurpriſe, the terror, the intoxication, the ambitious hopes, and the mutual ignorance of the reſt of the aſſembly, prompted them to join their voices to the general acclamation. The guards haſtened to take the oath of fidelity; the gates of the town were ſhut; and before the dawn of day, Magnentius became maſter of the troops and treaſure of the palace and city of Autun. By his ſecrecy and diligence he entertained

entertained ſome hopes of ſurpriſing the perſon of Conſtans, who was purſuing in the adjacent foreſt his favourite amuſement of hunting, or perhaps ſome pleaſures of a more private and criminal nature. The rapid progreſs of fame allowed him, however, an inſtant for flight, though the deſertion of his ſoldiers and ſubjects deprived him of the power of reſiſtance. Before he could reach a ſea-port in Spain, where he intended to embark, he was overtaken near Helena [71], at the foot of the Pyrenees, by a party of light cavalry, whoſe chief, regardleſs of the ſanctity of a temple, executed his commiſſion by the murder of the ſon of Conſtantine [72].

Magnentius and Vetranio aſſume the purple, A.D. 350 March 1.

As ſoon as the death of Conſtans had decided this eaſy but important revolution, the example of the court of Autun was imitated by the provinces of the weſt. The authority of Magnentius was acknowledged through the whole extent of the two great præfectures of Gaul and Italy; and the uſurper prepared, by every act of oppreſſion, to collect a treaſure, which might diſcharge the obligation of an immenſe donative, and ſupply the expences of a civil war. The martial countries

[71] This ancient city had once flouriſhed under the name of Illiberis (Pomponius Mela, ii. 5.). The munificence of Conſtantine gave it new ſplendor, and his mother's name. Helena (it is ſtill called Elne) became the ſeat of a biſhop, who long afterwards tranſferred his reſidence to Perpignan, the capital of modern Rouſillon. See d'Anville Notice de l'Ancienne Gaule, p. 380. Longuerue Deſcription de la France, p. 223. and the Marca Hiſpanica, l. i. c. 2.

[72] Zoſimus, l. ii. p. 119, 120. Zonaras, tom. ii. l. xiii. p. 13, and the Abbreviators.

CHAP. XVIII.

of Illyricum, from the Danube to the extremity of Greece, had long obeyed the government of Vetranio, an aged general, beloved for the ſimplicity of his manners, and who had acquired ſome reputation by his experience and ſervices in war[73]. Attached by habit, by duty, and by gratitude, to the houſe of Conſtantine, he immediately gave the ſtrongeſt aſſurances to the only ſurviving ſon of his late maſter, that he would expoſe, with unſhaken fidelity, his perſon and his troops, to inflict a juſt revenge on the traitors of Gaul. But the legions of Vetranio were ſeduced rather than provoked by the example of rebellion; their leader ſoon betrayed a want of firmneſs, or a want of ſincerity; and his ambition derived a ſpecious pretence from the approbation of the princeſs Conſtantina. That cruel and aſpiring woman, who had obtained from the great Conſtantine her father the rank of *Auguſta*, placed the diadem with her own hands on the head of the Illyrian general; and ſeemed to expect from his victory, the accompliſhment of thoſe unbounded hopes, of which ſhe had been diſappointed by the death of her huſband Hannibalianus. Perhaps it was without the conſent of Conſtantina, that the new emperor formed a neceſſary, though diſhonourable, alliance with the uſurper of the weſt,

[73] Eutropius (x. 10.) deſcribes Vetranio with more temper, and probably with more truth, than either of the two Victors. Vetranio was born of obſcure parents in the wildeſt parts of Mæſia; and ſo much had his education been neglected, that, after his elevation, he ſtudied the alphabet.

whoſe

CHAP. XVIII.

whoſe purple was ſo recently ſtained with her brother's blood [74].

Conſtantius refuſes to treat. A.D. 350.

The intelligence of theſe important events, which ſo deeply affected the honour and ſafety of the Imperial houſe, recalled the arms of Conſtantius from the inglorious proſecution of the Perſian war. He recommended the care of the eaſt to his lieutenants, and afterwards to his couſin Gallus, whom he raiſed from a priſon to a throne; and marched towards Europe, with a mind agitated by the conflict of hope and fear, of grief and indignation. On his arrival at Heraclea in Thrace, the emperor gave audience to the ambaſſadors of Magnentius and Vetranio. The firſt author of the conſpiracy, Marcellinus, who in ſome meaſure had beſtowed the purple on his new maſter, boldly accepted this dangerous commiſſion; and his three colleagues were ſelected from the illuſtrious perſonages of the ſtate and army. Theſe deputies were inſtructed to ſoothe the reſentment, and to alarm the fears, of Conſtantius. They were empowered to offer him the friendſhip and alliance of the weſtern princes, to cement their union by a double marriage; of Conſtantius with the daughter of Magnentius, and of Magnentius himſelf with the ambitious Conſtantina; and to acknowledge in the treaty the pre-eminence of rank, which might juſtly be claimed by the emperor of the eaſt. Should pride and miſtaken piety urge him to refuſe theſe equi-

74 The doubtful, fluctuating conduct of Vetranio is deſcribed by Julian in his firſt oration, and accurately explained by Spanheim, who diſcuſſes the ſituation and behaviour of Conſtantina.

CHAP. XVIII.

table conditions, the ambaſſadors were ordered to expatiate on the inevitable ruin which muſt attend his raſhneſs, if he ventured to provoke the ſovereigns of the weſt to exert their ſuperior ſtrength; and to employ againſt him that valour, thoſe abilities, and thoſe legions, to which the houſe of Conſtantine had been indebted for ſo many triumphs. Such propoſitions and ſuch arguments appeared to deſerve the moſt ſerious attention; the anſwer of Conſtantius was deferred till the next day; and as he had reflected on the importance of juſtifying a civil war in the opinion of the people, he thus addreſſed his council, who liſtened with real or affected credulity; "Laſt "night," ſaid he, "after I retired to reſt, the "ſhade of the great Conſtantine, embracing the "corpſe of my murdered brother, roſe before my "eyes; his well-known voice awakened me to "revenge, forbad me to deſpair of the republic, "and aſſured me of the ſucceſs and immortal "glory which would crown the juſtice of my "arms." The authority of ſuch a viſion, or rather of the prince who alleged it, ſilenced every doubt, and excluded all negociation. The ignominious terms of peace were rejected with diſdain. One of the ambaſſadors of the tyrant was diſmiſſed with the haughty anſwer of Conſtantius; his colleagues, as unworthy of the privileges of the law of nations, were put in irons; and the contending powers prepared to wage an implacable war[75].

[75] See Peter the Patrician, in the Excerpta Legationum, p. 27.

Such

CHAP. XVIII.

Depoſes Vetranio, A. D. 350, Dec. 25.

Such was the conduct, and ſuch perhaps was the duty, of the brother of Conſtans towards the perfidious uſurper of Gaul. The ſituation and character of Vetranio admitted of milder meaſures; and the policy of the eaſtern emperor was directed to diſunite his antagoniſt, and to ſeparate the forces of Illyricum from the cauſe of rebellion. It was an eaſy taſk to deceive the frankneſs and ſimplicity of Vetranio, who, fluctuating ſome time between the oppoſite views of honour and intereſt, diſplayed to the world the inſincerity of his temper, and was inſenſibly engaged in the ſnares of an artful negociation. Conſtantius acknowledged him as a legitimate and equal colleague in the empire, on condition that he would renounce his diſgraceful alliance with Magnentius, and appoint a place of interview on the frontiers of their reſpective provinces; where they might pledge their friendſhip by mutual vows of fidelity, and regulate by common conſent the future operations of the civil war. In conſequence of this agreement, Vetranio advanced to the city of Sardica[76], at the head of twenty thouſand horſe, and of a more numerous body of infantry; a power ſo far ſuperior to the forces of Conſtantius, that the Illyrian emperor appeared to command the life and fortunes of his rival, who, depending on the ſucceſs of his private negociations, had ſeduced the troops, and undermined

[76] Zonaras, tom. ii. l. xiii. p. 16. The poſition of Sardica, near the modern city of Sophia, appears better ſuited to this interview than the ſituation of either Naiſſus or Sirmium, where it is placed by Jerom, Socrates, and Sozomen.

the

CHAP. XVIII.

the throne, of Vetranio. The chiefs, who had ſecretly embraced the party of Conſtantius, prepared in his favour a public ſpectacle, calculated to diſcover and inflame the paſſions of the multitude[77]. The united armies were commanded to aſſemble in a large plain near the city. In the centre, according to the rules of ancient diſcipline, a military tribunal, or rather ſcaffold, was erected, from whence the emperors were accuſtomed, on ſolemn and important occaſions, to harangue the troops. The well-ordered ranks of Romans and Barbarians, with drawn ſwords, or with erected ſpears, the ſquadrons of cavalry, and the cohorts of infantry, diſtinguiſhed by the variety of their arms and enſigns, formed an immenſe circle round the tribunal; and the attentive ſilence which they preſerved was ſometimes interrupted by loud burſts of clamour or of applauſe. In the preſence of this formidable aſſembly, the two emperors were called upon to explain the ſituation of public affairs: the precedency of rank was yielded to the royal birth of Conſtantius; and though he was indifferently ſkilled in the arts of rhetoric, he acquitted himſelf, under theſe difficult circumſtances, with firmneſs, dexterity, and eloquence. The firſt part of his oration ſeemed to be pointed only againſt the tyrant of Gaul; but while he tragically lamented the cruel murder of Conſtans, he inſinuated, that none, except a brother, could claim a right to the ſuc-

[77] See the two firſt orations of Julian, particularly p. 31.; and Zoſimus, l. ii. p. 122. The diſtinct narrative of the hiſtorian ſerves to illuſtrate the diffuſe, but vague, deſcriptions of the orator.

CHAP. XVIII.

ceſſion of his brother. He diſplayed, with ſome complacency, the glories of his Imperial race; and recalled to the memory of the troops, the valour, the triumphs, the liberality of the great Conſtantine, to whoſe ſons they had engaged their allegiance by an oath of fidelity, which the ingratitude of his moſt favoured ſervants had tempted them to violate. The officers, who ſurrounded the tribunal, and were inſtructed to act their parts in this extraordinary ſcene, confeſſed the irreſiſtible power of reaſon and eloquence, by ſaluting the emperor Conſtantius as their lawful ſovereign. The contagion of loyalty and repentance was communicated from rank to rank; till the plain of Sardica reſounded with the univerſal acclamation of "Away with theſe upſtart uſurpers! Long "life and victory to the ſon of Conſtantine! Un- "der his banners alone we will fight and con- "quer." The ſhout of thouſands, their menacing geſtures, the fierce claſhing of their arms, aſtoniſhed and ſubdued the courage of Vetranio, who ſtood, amidſt the defection of his followers, in anxious and ſilent ſuſpence. Inſtead of embracing the laſt refuge of generous deſpair, he tamely ſubmitted to his fate; and taking the diadem from his head, in the view of both armies, fell proſtrate at the feet of his conqueror. Conſtantius uſed his victory with prudence and moderation; and raiſing from the ground the aged ſuppliant, whom he affected to ſtyle by the endearing name of Father, he gave him his hand to deſcend from the throne. The city of Pruſa was aſſigned for the exile or retirement of the abdicated

CHAP. XVIII.

cated monarch, who lived six years in the enjoyment of ease and affluence. He often expressed his grateful sense of the goodness of Constantius, and, with a very amiable simplicity, advised his benefactor to resign the sceptre of the world, and to seek for content (where alone it could be found) in the peaceful obscurity of a private condition [78].

Makes war against Magnentius, A. D. 351.

The behaviour of Constantius on this memorable occasion was celebrated with some appearance of justice; and his courtiers compared the studied orations which a Pericles or a Demosthenes addressed to the populace of Athens, with the victorious eloquence which had persuaded an armed multitude to desert and depose the object of their partial choice [79]. The approaching contest with Magnentius was of a more serious and bloody kind. The tyrant advanced by rapid marches to encounter Constantius, at the head of a numerous army, composed of Gauls and Spaniards, of Franks and Saxons; of those provincials who supplied the strength of the legions, and of those barbarians who were dreaded as the most formidable enemies of the republic. The

[78] The younger Victor assigns to his exile the emphatical appellation of "Voluptarium otium." Socrates (l. ii. c. 28.) is the voucher for the correspondence with the emperor, which would seem to prove, that Vetranio was, indeed, prope ad stultitiam simpliciſſimus.

[79] Eum Constantius . . . . . facundiæ vi dejectum Imperio in privatum otium removit. Quæ gloria post natum Imperium soli processit eloquio clementiâque, &c. Aurelius Victor, Julian, and Themistius (Orat. iii. and iv.), adorn this exploit with all the artificial and gaudy colouring of their rhetoric.

fertile

fertile plains [80] of the Lower Pannonia, between the Drave, the Save, and the Danube, preſented a ſpacious theatre; and the operations of the civil war were protracted during the ſummer months by the ſkill or timidity of the combatants [81]. Conſtantius had declared his intention of deciding the quarrel in the fields of Cibalis, a name that would animate his troops by the remembrance of the victory which, on the ſame auſpicious ground, had been obtained by the arms of his father Conſtantine. Yet, by the impregnable fortifications with which the emperor encompaſſed his camp, he appeared to decline, rather than to invite, a general engagement. It was the object of Magnentius to tempt or to compel his adverſary to relinquiſh this advantageous poſition; and he employed, with that view, the various marches, evolutions, and ſtratagems, which the knowledge of the art of war could ſuggeſt to an experienced officer. He carried by aſſault the important town of Siſcia; made an attack on the city of Sirmium, which lay in the rear of the Imperial camp; attempted to force a paſſage over the Save into the eaſtern provinces of

[80] Buſbequius (p. 112.) traverſed the Lower Hungary and Sclavonia at a time when they were reduced almoſt to a deſert, by the reciprocal hoſtilities of the Turks and Chriſtians. Yet he mentions with admiration the unconquerable fertility of the ſoil; and obſerves that the height of the graſs was ſufficient to conceal a loaded waggon from his ſight. See likewiſe Browne's Travels, in Harris's Collection, vol. ii. p. 762, &c.

[81] Zoſimus gives a very large account of the war, and the negociation (l. ii. p. 123—130.). But as he neither ſhews himſelf a ſoldier nor a politician, his narrative muſt be weighed with attention, and received with caution.

CHAP. XVIII.

Illyricum; and cut in pieces a numerous detachment, which he had allured into the narrow paſſes of Adarne. During the greater part of the ſummer, the tyrant of Gaul ſhewed himſelf maſter of the field. The troops of Conſtantius were haraſſed and diſpirited; his reputation declined in the eye of the world; and his pride condeſcended to ſolicit a treaty of peace, which would have reſigned to the aſſaſſin of Conſtans the ſovereignty of the provinces beyond the Alps. Theſe offers were enforced by the eloquence of Philip the Imperial ambaſſador; and the council as well as the army of Magnentius were diſpoſed to accept them. But the haughty uſurper, careleſs of the remonſtrances of his friends, gave orders that Philip ſhould be detained as a captive, or at leaſt as a hoſtage; while he diſpatched an officer to reproach Conſtantius with the weakneſs of his reign, and to inſult him by the promiſe of a pardon, if he would inſtantly abdicate the purple. "That "he ſhould confide in the juſtice of his cauſe, "and the protection of an avenging Deity," was the only anſwer which honour permitted the emperor to return. But he was ſo ſenſible of the difficulties of his ſituation, that he no longer dared to retaliate the indignity which had been offered to his repreſentative. The negociation of Philip was not, however, ineffectual, ſince he determined Sylvanus the Frank, a general of merit and reputation, to deſert with a conſiderable body of cavalry, a few days before the battle of Murſa.

The

CHAP. XVIII.

Battle of Murſa, A. D. 351, Sept. 28.

The city of Murſa, or Eſſek, celebrated in modern times for a bridge of boats five miles in length, over the river Drave, and the adjacent moraſſes [82], has been always conſidered as a place of importance in the wars of Hungary. Magnentius directing his march towards Murſa, ſet fire to the gates, and, by a ſudden aſſault, had almoſt ſcaled the walls of the town. The vigilance of the garriſon extinguiſhed the flames; the approach of Conſtantius left him no time to continue the operations of the ſiege; and the emperor ſoon removed the only obſtacle that could embarraſs his motions, by forcing a body of troops which had taken poſt in an adjoining amphitheatre. The field of battle round Murſa was a naked and level plain: on this ground the army of Conſtantius formed, with the Drave on their right; while their left, either from the nature of their diſpoſition, or from the ſuperiority of their cavalry, extended far beyond the right flank of Magnentius [83]. The troops on both ſides remained under arms in anxious expectation during the greateſt part of the morning; and the ſon of Conſtantine, after animating his ſoldiers by an eloquent ſpeech, retired into a church at ſome diſtance from the field of battle, and committed

[82] This remarkable bridge, which is flanked with towers, and ſupported on large wooden piles, was conſtructed, A. D. 1566, by Sultan Soliman, to facilitate the march of his armies into Hungary. See Browne's Travels, and Buſching's Syſtem of Geography, vol. ii. p. 90.

[83] This poſition, and the ſubſequent evolutions, are clearly, though conciſely, deſcribed by Julian, Orat. i. p. 36.

to

CHAP. XVIII.

to his generals the conduct of this decisive day [84]. They deserved his confidence by the valour and military skill which they exerted. They wisely began the action upon the left; and advancing their whole wing of cavalry in an oblique line, they suddenly wheeled it on the right flank of the enemy, which was unprepared to resist the impetuosity of their charge. But the Romans of the West soon rallied, by the habits of discipline; and the Barbarians of Germany supported the renown of their national bravery. The engagement soon became general; was maintained with various and singular turns of fortune; and scarcely ended with the darkness of the night. The signal victory which Constantius obtained is attributed to the arms of his cavalry. His cuirassiers are described as so many massy statues of steel, glittering with their scaly armour, and breaking with their ponderous lances the firm array of the Gallic legions. As soon as the legions gave way, the lighter and more active squadrons of the second line rode sword in hand into the intervals, and completed the disorder. In the mean while, the huge bodies of the Germans were exposed almost naked to the dexterity of the oriental archers; and whole troops of those Barbarians were urged

[84] Sulpicius Severus, l. ii. p. 405. The emperor passed the day in prayer with Valens, the Arian bishop of Mursa, who gained his confidence by announcing the success of the battle. M. de Tillemont (Hist. des Empereurs, tom. iv. p. 1110.) very properly remarks the silence of Julian with regard to the personal prowess of Constantius in the battle of Mursa. The silence of flattery is sometimes equal to the most positive and authentic evidence.

by

CHAP. XVIII.

by anguiſh and deſpair to precipitate themſelves into the broad and rapid ſtream of the Drave[85]. The number of the ſlain was computed at fifty-four thouſand men, and the ſlaughter of the conquerors was more conſiderable than that of the vanquiſhed[86]; a circumſtance which proves the obſtinacy of the conteſt, and juſtifies the obſervation of an ancient writer, that the forces of the empire were conſumed in the fatal battle of Murſa, by the loſs of a veteran army, ſufficient to defend the frontiers, or to add new triumphs to the glory of Rome[87]. Notwithſtanding the invectives of a ſervile orator, there is not the leaſt reaſon to believe that the tyrant deſerted his own ſtandard in the beginning of the engagement. He ſeems to have diſplayed the virtues of a general and of a ſoldier till the day was irrecoverably loſt, and his camp in the poſſeſſion of the enemy. Magnentius then conſulted his ſafety,

[85] Julian, Orat. i. p. 36, 37.; and Orat. ii. p. 59, 60. Zonaras, tom. ii. l. xiii. p. 17. Zoſimus, l. ii. p. 130—133. The laſt of theſe celebrates the dexterity of the archer Menelaus, who could diſcharge three arrows at the ſame time; an advantage which, according to his apprehenſion of military affairs, materially contribu ed to the victory of Conſtantius.

[86] According to Zonaras, Conſtantius, out of 80,000 men, loſt 30,000; and Magnentius loſt 24,000 out of 36,000. The other articles of this account ſeem probable and authentic, but the numbers of the tyrant's army muſt have been miſtaken, either by the author or his tranſcribers. Magnentius had collected the whole force of the Weſt, Romans and Barbarians, into one formidable body, which cannot fairly be eſtimated at leſs than 100,000 men. Julian, Orat. i. p. 34, 35.

[87] Ingentes R. I. vires eâ dimicatione conſumptæ ſunt, ad quælibet bella externa idoneæ, quæ multum triumphorum poſſent ſecuritatiſque conferre. Eutropius, x. 13. The younger Victor expreſſes himſelf to the ſame effect.

CHAP. XVIII.

and throwing away the Imperial ornaments, escaped with some difficulty from the pursuit of the light horse, who incessantly followed his rapid flight from the banks of the Drave to the foot of the Julian Alps [88].

Conquest of Italy, A. D. 352.

The approach of winter supplied the indolence of Constantius with specious reasons for deferring the prosecution of the war till the ensuing spring. Magnentius had fixed his residence in the city of Aquileia, and shewed a seeming resolution to dispute the passage of the mountains and morasses which fortified the confines of the Venetian province. The surprisal of a castle in the Alps by the secret march of the Imperialists, could scarcely have determined him to relinquish the possession of Italy, if the inclinations of the people had supported the cause of their tyrant [89]. But the memory of the cruelties exercised by his ministers, after the unsuccessful revolt of Nepotian, had left a deep impression of horror and resentment on the minds of the Romans. That rash youth, the son of the princess Eutropia, and the nephew of Constantine, had seen with indignation the sceptre of the West usurped by a perfidious barbarian.

[88] On this occasion, we must prefer the unsuspected testimony of Zosimus and Zonaras to the flattering assertions of Julian. The younger Victor paints the character of Magnentius in a singular light: "Sermonis acer, animi tumidi, et immodicè timidus; artifex tamen ad occultandam audaciæ specie formidinem." Is it most likely that in the battle of Mursa his behaviour was governed by nature or by art? I should incline for the latter.

[89] Julian. Orat. i. p. 38, 39. In that place, however, as well as in Oration ii. p. 97, he insinuates the general disposition of the senate, the people, and the soldiers of Italy, towards the party of the emperor.

CHAP. XVIII.

Arming a desperate troop of slaves and gladiators, he overpowered the feeble guard of the domestic tranquillity of Rome, received the homage of the senate, and assuming the title of Augustus, precariously reigned during a tumult of twenty-eight days. The march of some regular forces put an end to his ambitious hopes: the rebellion was extinguished in the blood of Nepotian, of his mother Eutropia, and of his adherents; and the proscription was extended to all who had contracted a fatal alliance with the name and family of Constantine [90]. But as soon as Constantius, after the battle of Mursa, became master of the sea-coast of Dalmatia, a band of noble exiles, who had ventured to equip a fleet in some harbour of the Hadriatic, sought protection and revenge in his victorious camp. By their secret intelligence with their countrymen, Rome and the Italian cities were persuaded to display the banners of Constantius on their walls. The grateful veterans, enriched by the liberality of the father, signalized their gratitude and loyalty to the son. The cavalry, the legions, and the auxiliaries of Italy, renewed their oath of allegiance to Constantius; and the usurper, alarmed by the general desertion, was compelled, with the remains of his faithful troops, to retire beyond the Alps into the

90 The elder Victor describes in a pathetic manner the miserable condition of Rome: "Cujus stolidum ingenium adeo P. R. patribusque exitio fuit, uti passim domus, fora, viæ, templaque, cruore, cadaveribusque opplerentur bustorum modo." Athanasius (tom. i. p. 677.) deplores the fate of several illustrious victims, and Julian (Orat. ii. p. 58.) execrates the cruelty of Marcellinus, the implacable enemy of the house of Constantine.

CHAP. XVIII.

provinces of Gaul. The detachments, however, which were ordered either to preſs or to intercept the flight of Magnentius, conducted themſelves with the uſual imprudence of ſucceſs; and allowed him, in the plains of Pavia, an opportunity of turning on his purſuers, and of gratifying his deſpair by the carnage of a uſeleſs victory [91].

Laſt defeat and death of Magnentius, A. D. 353, Auguſt 10.

The pride of Magnentius was reduced, by repeated misfortunes, to ſue, and to ſue in vain, for peace. He firſt diſpatched a ſenator, in whoſe abilities he confided, and afterwards ſeveral biſhops, whoſe holy character might obtain a more favourable audience, with the offer of reſigning the purple, and the promiſe of devoting the remainder of his life to the ſervice of the emperor. But Conſtantius, though he granted fair terms of pardon and reconciliation to all who abandoned the ſtandard of rebellion [92], avowed his inflexible reſolution to inflict a juſt puniſhment on the crimes of an aſſaſſin, whom he prepared to overwhelm on every ſide by the effort of his victorious arms. An Imperial fleet acquired the eaſy poſſeſſion of Africa and Spain, confirmed the wavering faith of the Mooriſh nations, and landed a conſiderable force, which paſſed the Pyrenees, and advanced towards Lyons, the laſt and fatal ſtation of Magnentius [93]. The temper of the ty-

[91] Zoſim. l. ii. p. 133. Victor in Epitome. The panegyriſts of Conſtantius, with their uſual candour, forget to mention this accidental defeat.

[92] Zonaras, tom. ii. l. xiii. p. 17. Julian, in ſeveral places of the two orations, expatiates on the clemency of Conſtantius to the rebels.

[93] Zoſim. l. ii. p. 133. Julian, Orat. i. p. 40. ii. p. 74.

CHAP. XVIII.

rant, which was never inclined to clemency, was urged by diſtreſs to exerciſe every act of oppreſſion which could extort an immediate ſupply from the cities of Gaul [94]. Their patience was at length exhauſted; and Treves, the ſeat of Prætorian government, gave the ſignal of revolt, by ſhutting her gates againſt Decentius, who had been raiſed by his brother to the rank either of Cæſar or of Auguſtus [95]. From Treves, Decentius was obliged to retire to Sens, where he was ſoon ſurrounded by an army of Germans, whom the pernicious arts of Conſtantius had introduced into the civil diſſenſions of Rome [96]. In the meantime, the Imperial troops forced the paſſages of the Cottian Alps, and in the bloody combat of Mount Seleucus irrevocably fixed the title of Rebels on the party of Magnentius [97]. He was un-

94 Ammian. xv. 6. Zoſim. l. ii. p. 123. Julian, who (Orat. i. p. 40.) inveighs againſt the cruel effects of the tyrant's deſpair, mentions (Orat. i. p. 34.) the oppreſſive edicts which were dictated by his neceſſities, or by his avarice. His ſubjects were compelled to purchaſe the Imperial demeſnes; a doubtful and dangerous ſpecies of property, which, in caſe of a revolution, might be imputed to them as a treaſonable uſurpation.

95 The medals of Magnentius celebrate the victories of the *two* Auguſti, and of the Cæſar. The Cæſar was another brother, named Deſiderius. See Tillemont, Hiſt. des Empereurs, tom. iv. p. 757.

96 Julian, Orat. i. p. 40. ii. p. 74. with Spanheim, p. 263. His Commentary illuſtrates the tranſactions of this civil war. Mons Seleuci was a ſmall place in the Cottian Alps, a few miles diſtant from Vapincum, or Gap, an epiſcopal city of Dauphiné. See d'Anville Notice de la Gaule, p. 464.; and Longuerue Deſcription de la France, p. 327.

97 Zoſimus, l. ii. p. 134. Liban. Orat. x. p. 268, 269. The latter moſt vehemently arraigns this cruel and ſelfiſh policy of Conſtantius.

CHAP. XVIII.

able to bring another army into the field; the fidelity of his guards was corrupted; and when he appeared in public to animate them by his exhortations, he was ſaluted with an unanimous ſhout of "Long live the emperor Conſtantius!" The tyrant, who perceived that they were preparing to deſerve pardon and rewards by the ſacrifice of the moſt obnoxious criminal, prevented their deſign by falling on his ſword [98]; a death more eaſy and more honourable than he could hope to obtain from the hands of an enemy, whoſe revenge would have been coloured with the ſpecious pretence of juſtice and fraternal piety. The example of ſuicide was imitated by Decentius, who ſtrangled himſelf on the news of his brother's death. The author of the conſpiracy, Marcellinus, had long ſince diſappeared in the battle of Murſa [99], and the public tranquillity was confirmed by the execution of the ſurviving leaders of a guilty and unſucceſsful faction. A ſevere inquiſition was extended over all who, either from choice or from compulſion, had been involved in the cauſe of rebellion. Paul, ſurnamed Catena, from his ſu-

[98] Julian, Orat. i. p. 40. Zoſimus, l. ii. p. 134. Socrates, l. ii. c. 32. Sozomen, l. iv. c. 7. The younger Victor deſcribes his death with ſome horrid circumſtances: Tran foſſo latere, ut erat vaſti corporis, vulnere naribuſque et ore cruorem effundens, exſpiravit. If we can give credit to Zonaras, the tyrant, before he expired, had the pleaſure of murdering with his own hands his mother and his brother Deſiderius.

[99] Julian (Orat. i. p. 58, 59.) ſeems at a loſs to determine, whether he inflicted on himſelf the puniſhment of his crimes, whether he was drowned in the Drave, or whether he was carried by the avenging dæmons from the field of battle to his deſtined place of eternal tortures.

perior

perior ſkill in the judicial exerciſe of tyranny, was ſent to explore the latent remains of the conſpiracy in the remote province of Britain. The honeſt indignation expreſſed by Martin, vice præfect of the iſland, was interpreted as an evidence of his own guilt; and the governor was urged to the neceſſity of turning againſt his breaſt the ſword with which he had been provoked to wound the Imperial miniſter. The moſt innocent ſubjects of the Weſt were expoſed to exile and confiſcation, to death and torture; and as the timid are always cruel, the mind of Conſtantius was inacceſſible to mercy [100].

[100] Ammian. xiv. 5. xxi. 16.

CHAP. XIX.

Conſtantius ſole Emperor.—Elevation and Death of Gallus.—Danger and Elevation of Julian.—Sarmatian and Perſian Wars.—Victories of Julian in Gaul.

CHAP. XIX.

Power of the eunuchs.

THE divided provinces of the empire were again united by the victory of Conſtantius; but as that feeble prince was deſtitute of perſonal merit, either in peace or war; as he feared his generals, and diſtruſted his miniſters; the triumph of his arms ſerved only to eſtabliſh the reign of the *eunuchs* over the Roman world. Thoſe unhappy beings, the ancient production of Oriental jealouſy and deſpotiſm [1], were introduced into Greece and Rome by the contagion of Aſiatic luxury [2]. Their progreſs was rapid; and the eunuchs, who in the time of Auguſtus, had been abhorred, as the monſtrous retinue of an Egyptian queen [3], were gradually admitted into the families

[1] Ammianus (l. xiv. c. 6.) imputes the firſt practice of caſtration to the cruel ingenuity of Semiramis, who is ſuppoſed to have reigned above nineteen hundred years before Chriſt. The uſe of eunuchs is of high antiquity, both in Aſia and Egypt. They are mentioned in the law of Moſes, Deuteron. xxiii. 1, See Goguet, Origines des Loix, &c. Part i. l. i. c. 3.

[2] Eunuchum dixti velle te;
Quia ſolæ utuntur his reginæ——
Terent. Eunuch. act i. ſcene 2.

This play is tranſlated from Menander, and the original muſt have appeared ſoon after the eaſtern conqueſts of Alexander.

[3] Miles . . ſpadonibus
Servire rugoſis poteſt.
orat. Carm. v. 9. and Dacier ad loc.

By

milies of matrons, of ſenators, and of the emperors themſelves[4]. Reſtrained by the ſevere edicts of Domitian and Nerva[5], cheriſhed by the pride of Diocletian, reduced to an humble ſtation by the prudence of Conſtantine[6], they multiplied in the palaces of his degenerate ſons, and inſenſibly acquired the knowledge, and at length the direction, of the ſecret councils of Conſtantius. The averſion and contempt which mankind has ſo uniformly entertained for that imperfect ſpecies, appears to have degraded their character, and to have rendered them almoſt as incapable as they were ſuppoſed to be, of conceiving any generous ſentiment, or of performing any worthy action[7]. But the eunuchs were ſkilled

CHAP. XIX.

By the word *ſpadones*, the Romans very forcibly expreſſed their abhorrence of this mutilated condition. The Greek appellation of eunuchs, which inſenſibly prevailed, had a milder ſound, and a more ambiguous ſenſe.

4 We need only mention Poſides, a freedman and eunuch of Claudius, in whoſe favour the emperor proſtituted ſome of the moſt honourable rewards of military valour. See Sueton. in Claudio, c. 28. Poſides employed a great part of his wealth in building.

Ut *Spadonem* vincebat Capitolia noſtra
Poſides.

Juvenal. Sat. xiv.

5 Caſtrari mares vetuit. Sueton. in Domitian. c. 7. See Dion. Caſſius, l. lxvii. p. 1107. l. lxviii p. 1119.

6 There is a paſſage in the Auguſtan Hiſtory, p. 137, in which Lampridius, whilſt he praiſes Alexander Severus and Conſtantine for reſtraining the tyranny of the eunuchs, deplores the miſchiefs which they occaſioned in other reigns. Huc accedit quod eunuchos nec in conſiliis nec in miniſteriis habuit; qui ſoli principes perdunt, dum eos more gentium aut regum Perſarum volunt vivere; qui a populo etiam amiciſſimum ſemovent; qui internuntii ſunt, aliud quàm reſpondetur referentes; claudentes principem ſuum, et agentes ante omnia ne quid ſciat.

7 Xenophon (Cyropœdia, l. viii. p. 540.) has ſtated the ſpecious reaſons which engaged Cyrus to entruſt his perſon to the guard of eunuchs.

CHAP. XIX.

ſkilled in the arts of flattery and intrigue; and they alternately governed the mind of Conſtantius by his fears, his indolence, and his vanity [8]. Whilſt he viewed in a deceitful mirror the fair appearance of public proſperity, he ſupinely permitted them to intercept the complaints of the injured provinces, to accumulate immenſe treaſures by the ſale of juſtice and of honours; to diſgrace the moſt important dignities, by the promotion of thoſe who had purchaſed at their hands the powers of oppreſſion [9], and to gratify their reſentment againſt the few independent ſpirits, who arrogantly refuſed to ſolicit the protection of ſlaves. Of theſe ſlaves the moſt diſtinguiſhed was the chamberlain Euſebius, who ruled the monarch and the palace with ſuch abſolute ſway, that Conſtantius, according to the ſarcaſm of an impartial hiſtorian, poſſeſſed ſome credit with this haughty

eunuchs. He had obſerved in animals, that although the practice of caſtration might tame their ungovernable fierceneſs, it did not diminiſh their ſtrength or ſpirit; and he perſuaded himſelf, that thoſe who were ſeparated from the reſt of human kind, would be more firmly attached to the perſon of their benefactor. But a long experience has contradicted the judgment of Cyrus. Some particular inſtances may occur of eunuchs diſtinguiſhed by their fidelity, their valour, and their abilities; but if we examine the general hiſtory of Perſia, India, and China, we ſhall find that the power of the eunuchs has uniformly marked the decline and fall of every dynaſty.

[8] See Ammianus Marcellinus, l. xxi. c. 16. l. xxii. c. 4. The whole tenor of his impartial hiſtory ſerves to juſtify the invectives of Mamertinus, of Libanius, and of Julian himſelf, who have inſulted the vices of the court of Conſtantius.

[9] Aurelius Victor cenſures the negligence of his ſovereign in chuſing the governors of the provinces, and the generals of the army, and concludes his hiſtory with a very bold obſervation, as it is much more dangerous under a feeble reign to attack the miniſters than the maſter himſelf. "Uti verum abſolvam brevi, ut Imperatore ipſo "clarius ita apparitorum pleriſque magis atrox nihil."

favourite.

favourite [10]. By his artful ſuggeſtions, the emperor was perſuaded to ſubſcribe the condemnation of the unfortunate Gallus, and to add a new crime to the long liſt of unnatural murders which pollute the honour of the houſe of Conſtantine. CHAP. XIX.

When the two nephews of Conſtantine, Gallus and Julian, were ſaved from the fury of the ſoldiers, the former was about twelve, and the latter about ſix, years of age; and, as the eldeſt was thought to be of a ſickly conſtitution, they obtained with the leſs difficulty a precarious and dependent life, from the affected pity of Conſtantius, who was ſenſible that the execution of theſe helpleſs orphans would have been eſteemed, by all mankind, an act of the moſt deliberate cruelty [11]. Different cities of Ionia and Bithynia were aſſigned for the places of their exile and education; but, as ſoon as their growing years excited the jealouſy of the emperor, he judged it more prudent to ſecure thoſe unhappy youths in the ſtrong caſtle of Macellum, near Cæſarea. The treatment which they experienced during a ſix years confinement, was partly ſuch as they could hope from a careful guardian, and partly ſuch as they might dread from a ſuſpicious ty- Education of Gallus and Julian.

[10] Apud quem (ſi verè dici debeat) multum Conſtantius potuit. Ammian. l. xviii. c. 4.

[11] Gregory Nazianzen (Orat. iii. p. 90.) reproaches the apoſtate with his ingratitude towards Mark, biſhop of Arethuſa, who had contributed to ſave his life; and we learn, though from a leſs reſpectable authority (Tillemont, Hiſt. des Empereurs, tom. iv. p. 916), that Julian was concealed in the ſanctuary of a church.

rant.

CHAP. XIX.

rant[12]. Their priſon was an ancient palace, the reſidence of the kings of Cappadocia; the ſituation was pleaſant, the buildings ſtately, the incloſure ſpacious. They purſued their ſtudies, and practiſed their exerciſes, under the tuition of the moſt ſkilful maſters; and the numerous houſehold appointed to attend, or rather to guard, the nephews of Conſtantine, was not unworthy of the dignity of their birth. But they could not diſguiſe to themſelves that they were deprived of fortune, of freedom, and of ſafety; ſecluded from the ſociety of all whom they could truſt or eſteem, and condemned to paſs their melancholy hours in the company of ſlaves, devoted to the commands of a tyrant, who had already injured them beyond the hope of reconciliation. At length, however, the emergencies of the ſtate compelled the emperor, or rather his eunuchs, to inveſt Gallus, in the twenty-fifth year of his age, with the title of Cæſar, and to cement this political connection by his marriage with the princeſs Conſtantina. After a formal interview, in which the two princes mutually engaged their faith never to undertake any thing to the prejudice of each other, they repaired without delay to their reſpective ſtations. Conſtantius continued his march towards the Weſt, and Gallus fixed his re-

Gallus declared Cæſar, A. D. 351. March 5.

[12] The moſt authentic account of the education and adventures of Julian, is contained in the epiſtle or manifeſto which he himſelf addreſſed to the ſenate and people of Athens. Libanius (Orat. Parentalis), on the ſide of the Pagans, and Socrates (l. iii. c. 1.), on that of the Chriſtians, had preſerved ſeveral intereſting circumſtances.

ſidence

CHAP. XIX.

ſidence at Antioch, from whence, with a delegated authority, he adminiſtered the five great dioceſes of the eaſtern præfecture[13]. In this fortunate change, the new Cæſar was not unmindful of his brother Julian, who obtained the honours of his rank, the appearances of liberty, and the reſtitution of an ample patrimony[14].

Cruelty and imprudence of Gallus.

The writers the moſt indulgent to the memory of Gallus, and even Julian himſelf, though he wiſhed to caſt a veil over the frailties of his brother, are obliged to confeſs that the Cæſar was incapable of reigning. Tranſported from a priſon to a throne, he poſſeſſed neither genius nor application, nor docility to compenſate for the want of knowledge and experience. A temper naturally moroſe and violent, inſtead of being corrected, was ſoured by ſolitude and adverſity; the remembrance of what he had endured, diſpoſed him to retaliation rather than to ſympathy; and the ungoverned ſallies of his rage were often fatal to thoſe who approached his perſon, or were ſubject to his power[15]. Conſtantina, his wife, is deſcribed,

[13] For the promotion of Gallus, ſee Idatius, Zoſimus, and the two Victors. According to Philoſtorgius (l. iv. c. 1.), Theophilus, an Arian biſhop, was the witneſs, and, as it were, the guarantee, of this ſolemn engagement. He ſupported that character with generous firmneſs; but M. de Tillemont (Hiſt. des Empereurs, tom. iv. p. 1120.) thinks it very improbable that an heretic ſhould have poſſeſſed ſuch virtue.

[14] Julian was at firſt permitted to purſue his ſtudies at Conſtantinople, but the reputation which he acquired ſoon excited the jealouſy of Conſtantius; and the young prince was adviſed to withdraw himſelf to the leſs conſpicuous ſcenes of Bithynia and Ionia.

[15] See Julian ad S. P. Q. A. p. 271. Jerom. in Chron. Aurelius Victor, Eutropius, x. 14. I ſhall copy the words of Eutropius, who wrote

CHAP. XIX.

deſcribed, not as woman, but as one of the infernal furies tormented with an inſatiate thirſt of human blood [16]. Inſtead of employing her influence to inſinuate the mild counſels of prudence and humanity, ſhe exaſperated the fierce paſſions of her huſband; and as ſhe retained the vanity, though ſhe had renounced the gentleneſs of her ſex, a pearl necklace was eſteemed an equivalent price for the murder of an innocent and virtuous nobleman [17]. The cruelty of Gallus was ſometimes diſplayed in the undiſſembled violence of popular or military executions; and was ſometimes diſguiſed by the abuſe of law, and the forms of judicial proceedings. The private houſes of Antioch, and the places of public reſort, were beſieged by ſpies and informers; and the Cæſar himſelf, concealed in a plebeian habit, very frequently condeſcended to aſſume that odious character. Every apartment of the palace was adorned with the inſtruments of death and torture, and a general conſternation was diffuſed through the capital of Syria. The Prince of the Eaſt, as if he

wrote his abridgment about fifteen years after the death of Gallus, when there was no longer any motive either to flatter or to depreciate his character. "Multis incivilibus geſtis Gallus Cæſar . . . vir "naturâ ferox et ad tyrannidem pronior, ſi ſub jure imperare "licuiſſet."

[16] Megæra quidem mortalis, inflammatrix ſævientis aſſidua, humani cruoris avida, &c. Ammian. Marcellin. l. xiv. c. 1. The ſincerity of Ammianus would not ſuffer him to miſrepreſent facts or characters, but his love of *ambitious* ornaments frequently betrayed him into an unnatural vehemence of expreſſion.

[17] His name was Clematius of Alexandria, and his only crime was a refuſal to gratify the deſires of his mother-in law; who ſolicited his death, becauſe ſhe had been diſappointed of his love. Ammian. l. xiv. c. 1.

had

CHAP. XIX.

had been conſcious how much he had to fear, and how little he deſerved to reign, ſelected for the objects of his reſentment, the provincials accuſed of ſome imaginary treaſon, and his own courtiers, whom with more reaſon he ſuſpected of incenſing, by their ſecret correſpondence, the timid and ſuſpicious mind of Conſtantius. But he forgot that he was depriving himſelf of his only ſupport, the affection of the people; whilſt he furniſhed the malice of his enemies with the arms of truth, and afforded the emperor the faireſt pretence of exacting the forfeit of his purple, and of his life [18].

Maſſacre of the Imperial miniſters, A. D. 354.

As long as the civil war ſuſpended the fate of the Roman world, Conſtantius diſſembled his knowledge of the weak and cruel adminiſtration to which his choice had ſubjected the Eaſt; and the diſcovery of ſome aſſaſſins, ſecretly diſpatched to Antioch by the tyrant of Gaul, was employed to convince the public, that the emperor and the Cæſar were united by the ſame intereſt, and purſued by the ſame enemies [19]. But when the victory was decided in favour of Conſtantius, his dependent colleague became leſs uſeful and leſs formidable. Every circumſtance of his conduct was ſeverely and ſuſpiciouſly examined, and it was privately reſolved, either to deprive Gallus of the

[18] See in Ammianus (l. xiv. c. 1. 7.) a very ample detail of the cruelties of Gallus. His brother Julian (p. 272.) inſinuates, that a ſecret conſpiracy had been formed againſt him; and Zoſimus names (l. ii. p. 135.) the perſons engaged in it; a miniſter of conſiderable rank, and two obſcure agents, who were reſolved to make their fortune.

[19] Zonaras, l. xiii. tom. ii. p. 17, 18. The aſſaſſins had ſeduced a great number of legionaries; but their deſigns were diſcovered and revealed by an old woman in whoſe cottage they lodged.

purple,

CHAP. XIX.

purple, or at leaſt to remove him from the indolent luxury of Aſia to the hardſhips and dangers of a German war. The death of Theophilus, conſular of the province of Syria, who in a time of ſcarcity had been maſſacred by the people of Antioch, with the connivance, and almoſt at the inſtigation, of Gallus, was juſtly reſented, not only as an act of wanton cruelty, but as a dangerous inſult on the ſupreme majeſty of Conſtantius. Two miniſters of illuſtrious rank, Domitian, the Oriental præfect, and Montius, quæſtor of the palace, were empowered by a ſpecial commiſſion to viſit and reform the ſtate of the Eaſt. They were inſtructed to behave towards Gallus with moderation and reſpect, and, by the gentleſt arts of perſuaſion, to engage him to comply with the invitation of his brother and colleague. The raſhneſs of the præfect diſappointed theſe prudent meaſures, and haſtened his own ruin, as well as that of his enemy. On his arrival at Antioch, Domitian paſſed diſdainfully before the gates of the palace, and alleging a ſlight pretence of indiſpoſition, continued ſeveral days in ſullen retirement, to prepare an inflammatory memorial, which he tranſmitted to the Imperial court. Yielding at length to the preſſing ſolicitations of Gallus, the præfect condeſcended to take his ſeat in council; but his firſt ſtep was to ſignify a conciſe and haughty mandate, importing that the Cæſar ſhould immediately repair to Italy, and threatening that he himſelf would puniſh his delay or heſitation, by ſuſpending the uſual allowance of his houſehold. The nephew and daughter of

of Conſtantine, who could ill brook the inſolence of a ſubject, expreſſed their reſentment by inſtantly delivering Domitian to the cuſtody of a guard. The quarrel ſtill admitted of ſome terms of accommodation. They were rendered impracticable by the imprudent behaviour of Montius, a ſtateſman, whoſe art and experience were frequently betrayed by the levity of his diſpoſition [20]. The quæſtor reproached Gallus in haughty language, that a prince who was ſcarcely authorized to remove a municipal magiſtrate ſhould preſume to impriſon a Prætorian præfect; convoked a meeting of the civil and military officers; and required them, in the name of their ſovereign, to defend the perſon and dignity of his repreſentatives. By this raſh declaration of war, the impatient temper of Gallus was provoked to embrace the moſt deſperate counſels. He ordered his guards to ſtand to their arms, aſſembled the populace of Antioch, and recommended to their zeal the care of his ſafety and revenge. His commands were too fatally obeyed. They rudely ſeized the præfect and the quæſtor, and tying their legs together with ropes, they dragged them through the ſtreets of the city, inflicted a thouſand inſults and a thouſand wounds on theſe unhappy victims, and at laſt precipitated their

CHAP. XIX.

[20] In the preſent text of Ammianus, we read, *Aſper*, quidem, ſed ad *lenitatem* propenſior; which forms a ſentence of contradictory nonſenſe. With the aid of an old manuſcript, Valeſius has rectified the firſt of theſe corruptions, and we perceive a ray of light in the ſubſtitution of the word *aſper*. If we venture to change *lenitatem* into *levitatem*, this alterarion of a ſingle letter will render the whole paſſage clear and conſiſtent.

CHAP. XIX.

mangled and lifeleſs bodies into the ſtream of the Orontes [21].

Danger-ous ſitua-tion of Gallus.

After ſuch a deed, whatever might have been the deſigns of Gallus, it was only in a field of battle that he could aſſert his innocence with any hope of ſucceſs. But the mind of that prince was formed of an equal mixture of violence and weakneſs. Inſtead of aſſuming the title of Auguſtus, inſtead of employing in his defence the troops and treaſures of the Eaſt, he ſuffered himſelf to be deceived by the affected tranquillity of Conſtantius, who, leaving him the vain pageantry of a court, imperceptibly recalled the veteran legions from the provinces of Aſia. But as it ſtill appeared dangerous to arreſt Gallus in his capital, the ſlow and ſafer arts of diſſimulation were practiſed with ſucceſs. The frequent and preſſing epiſtles of Conſtantius were filled with profeſſions of confidence and friendſhip; exhorting the Cæſar to diſcharge the duties of his high ſtation, to relieve his colleague from a part of the public cares, and to aſſiſt the Weſt by his preſence, his counſels, and his arms. After ſo many reciprocal injuries, Gallus had reaſon to fear and to diſtruſt. But he had neglected the opportunities of flight and of reſiſtance; he was ſeduced by the flattering aſſurances of the tribune Scudilo, who, under the ſemblance of a rough ſoldier, diſguiſed the

[21] Inſtead of being obliged to collect ſcattered and imperfect hints from various ſources, we now enter into the full ſtream of the hiſtory of Ammianus, and need only refer to the ſeventh and ninth chapters of his fourteenth book. Philoſtorgius, however (l. iii. c. 28.), though partial to Gallus, ſhould not be entirely overlooked.

moſt

moſt artful inſinuation; and he depended on the credit of his wife Conſtantina, till the unſeaſonable death of that princeſs completed the ruin in which he had been involved by her impetuous paſſions [22].

His diſgrace and death, A.D. 354, December.

After a long delay, the reluctant Cæſar ſet forwards on his journey to the Imperial court. From Antioch to Hadrianople, he traverſed the wide extent of his dominions with a numerous and ſtately train; and as he laboured to conceal his apprehenſions from the world, and perhaps from himſelf, he entertained the people of Conſtantinople with an exhibition of the games of the circus. The progreſs of the journey might, however, have warned him of the impending danger. In all the principal cities he was met by miniſters of confidence, commiſſioned to ſeize the offices of government, to obſerve his motions, and to prevent the haſty ſallies of his deſpair. The perſons diſpatched to ſecure the provinces which he left behind, paſſed him with cold ſalutations, or affected diſdain; and the troops, whoſe ſtation lay along the public road, were ſtudiouſly removed on his approach, leſt they might be tempted to offer their ſwords for the ſervice of a civil war [23].

[22] She had preceded her huſband; but died of a fever on the road, at a little place in Bithynia, called Cœnum Gallicanum.

[23] The Thebæan legions, which were then quartered at Hadrianople, ſent a deputation to Gallus, with a tender of their ſervices. Ammian. l. xiv. c. 11. The Notitia (ſ. 6. 20. 38. edit. Labb.) mentions three ſeveral legions which bore the name of Thebæan. The zeal of M. de Voltaire, to deſtroy a deſpicable though celebrated legend, has tempted him on the ſlighteſt grounds to deny the exiſtence of a Thebæan legion in the Roman armies. See Oeuvres de Voltaire, tom. xv. p. 414. quarto edition.

CHAP. XIX.

After Gallus had been permitted to repoſe himſelf a few days at Hadrianople, he received a mandate, expreſſed in the moſt haughty and abſolute ſtyle, that his ſplendid retinue ſhould halt in that city, while the Cæſar himſelf, with only ten poſt-carriages, ſhould haſten to the Imperial reſidence at Milan. In this rapid journey, the profound reſpect which was due to the brother and colleague of Conſtantius, was inſenſibly changed into rude familiarity; and Gallus, who diſcovered in the countenances of the attendants that they already conſidered themſelves as his guards, and might ſoon be employed as his executioners, began to accuſe his fatal raſhneſs, and to recollect with terror and remorſe the conduct by which he had provoked his fate. The diſſimulation which had hitherto been preſerved, was laid aſide at Petovio in Pannonia. He was conducted to a palace in the ſuburbs, where the general Barbatio, with a ſelect band of ſoldiers, who could neither be moved by pity, nor corrupted by rewards, expected the arrival of his illuſtrious victim. In the cloſe of the evening he was arreſted, ignominiouſly ſtripped of the enſigns of Cæſar, and hurried away to Pola in Iſtria, a ſequeſtered priſon which had been ſo recently polluted with royal blood. The horror which he felt was ſoon increaſed by the appearance of his implacable enemy the eunuch Euſebius, who, with the aſſiſtance of a notary and a tribune, proceeded to interrogate him concerning the adminiſtration of the Eaſt. The Cæſar ſunk under the weight of ſhame and guilt, confeſſed all the criminal actions,

CHAP. XIX.

actions, and all the treaſonable deſigns with which he was charged; and by imputing them to the advice of his wife, exaſperated the indignation of Conſtantius, who reviewed with partial prejudice the minutes of the examination. The emperor was eaſily convinced, that his own ſafety was incompatible with the life of his couſin: the ſentence of death was ſigned, diſpatched, and executed; and the nephew of Conſtantine, with his hands tied behind his back, was beheaded in priſon like the vileſt malefactor [24]. Thoſe who are inclined to palliate the cruelties of Conſtantius, aſſert that he ſoon relented, and endeavoured to recal the bloody mandate; but that the ſecond meſſenger entruſted with the reprieve, was detained by the eunuchs, who dreaded the unforgiving temper of Gallus, and were deſirous of reuniting to *their* empire the wealthy provinces of the Eaſt [25].

The danger and eſcape of Julian.

Beſides the reigning emperor, Julian alone ſurvived, of all the numerous poſterity of Conſtantius Chlorus. The misfortune of his royal birth involved him in the diſgrace of Gallus. From his retirement in the happy country of Ionia, he was conveyed under a ſtrong guard to

[24] See the complete narrative of the journey and death of Gallus in Ammianus, l. 14. c. 11. Julian complains that his brother was put to death without a trial; attempts to juſtify, or at leaſt to excuſe, the cruel revenge which he had inflicted on his enemies; but ſeems at laſt to acknowledge that he might juſtly have been deprived of the purple.

[25] Philoſtorgius, l. iv. c. 2. Zonaras, l. xiii. tom. ii. p. 19. But the former was partial towards an Arian monarch, and the latter tranſcribed, without choice or criticiſm, whatever he found in the writings of the ancients.

CHAP. XIX.

the court of Milan; where he languiſhed above ſeven months, in the continual apprehenſion of ſuffering the ſame ignominious death, which was daily inflicted, almoſt before his eyes, on the friends and adherents of his perſecuted family. His looks, his geſtures, his ſilence, were ſcrutinized with malignant curioſity, and he was perpetually aſſaulted by enemies, whom he had never offended, and by arts to which he was a ſtranger [26]. But in the ſchool of adverſity, Julian inſenſibly acquired the virtues of firmneſs and diſcretion. He defended his honor, as well as his life, againſt the enſnaring ſubtleties of the eunuchs, who endeavoured to extort ſome declaration of his ſentiments; and whilſt he cautiouſly ſuppreſſed his grief and reſentment, he nobly diſdained to flatter the tyrant, by any ſeeming approbation of his brother's murder. Julian moſt devoutly aſcribes his miraculous deliverance to the protection of the Gods, who had exempted his innocence from the ſentence of deſtruction pronounced by their juſtice againſt the impious houſe of Conſtantine [27]. As the moſt effectual inſtrument of their providence, he grate-

[26] See Ammianus Marcellin, l. xv. c. 1. 3. 8. Julian himſelf, in his epiſtle to the Athenians, draws a very lively and juſt picture of his own danger, and of his ſentiments. He ſhews, however, a tendency to exaggerate his ſufferings, by inſinuating, though in obſcure terms, that they laſted above a year; a period which cannot be reconciled with the truth of Chronology.

[27] Julian has worked the crimes and misfortunes of the family of Conſtantine into an allegorical fable, which is happily conceived and agreeably related. It forms the concluſion of the ſeventh Oration, from whence it has been detached and tranſlated by the Abbé de la Bleterie. Vei de Jovien, tom. ii. p. 385—408.

fully

CHAP. XIX.

fully acknowledges the ſteady and generous friendſhip of the empreſs Euſebia[28], a woman of beauty and merit, who, by the aſcendant which ſhe had gained over the mind of her huſband, counterbalanced, in ſome meaſure, the powerful conſpiracy of the eunuchs. By the interceſſion of his patroneſs, Julian was admitted into the Imperial preſence; he pleaded his cauſe with a decent freedom, he was heard with favour; and, notwithſtanding the efforts of his enemies, who urged the danger of ſparing an avenger of the blood of Gallus, the milder ſentiment of Euſebia prevailed in the council. But the effects of a ſecond interview were dreaded by the eunuchs; and Julian was adviſed to withdraw for a while into the neighbourhood of Milan, till the emperor thought proper to aſſign the city of Athens for the place of his honorable exile. As he had diſcovered from his earlieſt youth, a propenſity, or rather paſſion, for the language, the manners, the learning, and the religion of the Greeks, he obeyed with pleaſure an order ſo agreeable to his wiſhes. Far from the tumult of arms and the treachery of courts, he ſpent ſix months amidſt the groves of the academy, in a free intercourſe with the philoſophers of the age, who ſtudied to cultivate the genius, to encourage the vanity, and to inflame the devotion of their royal pupil. Their

He is ſent to Athens, A. D. 355, May.

[28] She was a native of Theſſalonica in Macedonia, of a noble family, and the daughter as well as ſiſter of conſuls. Her marriage with the emperor may be placed in the year 352. In a divided age, the hiſtorians of all parties agree in her praiſes. See their teſtimonies collected by Tillemont, Hiſt. des Empereurs, tom. iv. p. 750—754.

CHAP. XIX.

labours were not unſucceſsful; and Julian inviolably preſerved for Athens that tender regard, which ſeldom fails to ariſe in a liberal mind, from the recollection of the place where it has diſcovered and exerciſed its growing powers. The gentleneſs and affability of manners, which his temper ſuggeſted and his ſituation impoſed, inſenſibly engaged the affections of the ſtrangers, as well as citizens, with whom he converſed. Some of his fellow-ſtudents might perhaps examine his behaviour with an eye of prejudice and averſion; but Julian eſtabliſhed, in the ſchool of Athens, a general prepoſſeſſion in favour of his virtues and talents, which was ſoon diffuſed over the Roman world [29].

Recalled to Milan,

Whilſt his hours were paſſed in ſtudious retirement, the empreſs, reſolute to atchieve the generous deſign which ſhe had undertaken, was not unmindful of the care of his fortune. The death of the late Cæſar had left Conſtantius inveſted with the ſole command, and oppreſſed by the accumulated weight of a mighty empire. Before the wounds of civil diſcord could be healed, the provinces of Gaul were overwhelmed by a deluge of Barbarians. The Sarmatians no longer re-

[29] Libanius and Gregory Nazianzen have exhauſted the arts as well as the powers of their eloquence, to repreſent Julian as the firſt of heroes, or the worſt of tyrants. Gregory was his fellow-ſtudent at Athens; and the ſymptoms which he ſo tragically deſcribes, of the future wickedneſs of the apoſtate, amount only to ſome bodily imperfections, and to ſome peculiarities in his ſpeech and manner. He proteſts, however, that he *then* foreſaw and foretold the calamities of the church and ſtate (Greg. Nazianzen. Orat. iv. p. 121, 122.).

ſpected

CHAP. XIX.

ſpected the barrier of the Danube. The impunity of rapine had increaſed the boldneſs and numbers of the wild Iſaurians: thoſe robbers deſcended from their craggy mountains to ravage the adjacent country, and had even preſumed, though without ſucceſs, to beſiege the important city of Seleucia, which was defended by a garriſon of three Roman legions. Above all, the Perſian monarch, elated by victory, again threatened the peace of Aſia, and the preſence of the emperor was indiſpenſably required, both in the Weſt, and in the Eaſt. For the firſt time, Conſtantius ſincerely acknowledged, that his ſingle ſtrength was unequal to ſuch an extent of care and of dominion [30]. Inſenſible to the voice of flattery, which aſſured him that his all-powerful virtue, and celeſtial fortune, would ſtill continue to triumph over every obſtacle, he liſtened with complacency to the advice of Euſebia, which gratified his indolence, without offending his ſuſpicious pride. As ſhe perceived that the remembrance of Gallus dwelt on the emperor's mind, ſhe artfully turned his attention to the oppoſite characters of the two brothers, which from their infancy had been compared to thoſe of Domitian and of Titus [31]. She accuſtomed her huſband to con-

[30] Succumbere tot neceſſitatibus tamque crebris unum ſe quod nunquam fecerat apertè demonſtrans. Ammian. l. xv. c. 8. He then expreſſes, in their own words, the flattering aſſurances of the courtiers.

[31] Tantum a temperatis moribus Juliani differens fratis quantum inter Veſpaſiani filios fuit, Domitianum et Titum. Ammian. l. xiv. c. 11. The circumſtances and education of the two brothers were ſo nearly the ſame, as to afford a ſtrong example of the innate difference of characters.

ſider

CHAP. XIX.

ſider Julian as a youth of a mild unambitious diſpoſition, whoſe allegiance and gratitude might be ſecured by the gift of the purple, and who was qualified to fill, with honour, a ſubordinate ſtation, without aſpiring to diſpute the commands, or to ſhade the glories, of his ſovereign and benefactor. After an obſtinate, though ſecret ſtruggle, the oppoſition of the favourite eunuchs ſubmitted to the aſcendency of the empreſs; and it was reſolved that Julian, after celebrating his nuptials with Helena, ſiſter of Conſtantius, ſhould be appointed, with the title of Cæſar, to reign over the countries beyond the Alps [32].

Although the order which recalled him to court was probably accompanied by ſome intimation of his approaching greatneſs, he appeals to the people of Athens to witneſs his tears of undiſſembled ſorrow, when he was reluctantly torn away from his beloved retirement [33]. He trembled for his life, for his fame, and even for his virtue; and his ſole confidence was derived from the perſuaſion, that Minerva inſpired all his actions, and that he was protected by an inviſible guard of angels, whom for that purpoſe ſhe had borrowed from the Sun and Moon. He approached with horror the palace of Milan; nor could the ingenuous youth conceal his indignation, when he found himſelf accoſted with falſe and ſervile reſpect by the aſſaſſins of his family. Euſebia, re-

[32] Ammianus, l. xv. c. 8. Zoſimus, l. iii. p. 137, 138.

[33] Julian. ad S. P. Q. A. p. 275, 276. Libanius. Orat. x, p. 268. Julian did not yield till the Gods had ſignified their will by repeated viſions and omens. His piety then forbade him to reſiſt.

joicing

CHAP. XIX.

joicing in the ſucceſs of her benevolent ſchemes, embraced, him with the tenderneſs of a ſiſter; and endeavoured, by the moſt ſoothing careſſes, to diſpel his terrors, and reconcile him to his fortune. But the ceremony of ſhaving his beard, and his awkward demeanour, when he firſt exchanged the cloak of a Greek philoſopher for the military habit of a Roman prince, amuſed, during a few days, the levity of the Imperial court [34].

The emperors of the age of Conſtantine no longer deigned to conſult with the ſenate in the choice of a colleague; but they were anxious that their nomination ſhould be ratified by the conſent of the army. On this ſolemn occaſion, the guards, with the other troops whoſe ſtations were in the neighbourhood of Milan, appeared under arms; and Conſtantius aſcended his lofty tribunal, holding by the hand his couſin Julian, who entered the ſame day into the twenty-fifth year of his age [35]. In a ſtudied ſpeech, conceived and delivered with dignity, the emperor repreſented the various dangers which threatened the proſperity of the republic, the neceſſity of naming a Cæſar for the adminiſtration of the Weſt, and his own intention, if it was agreeable to their wiſhes, of rewarding with the honours of the purple, the promiſing virtues of the nephew of Conſtantine. The approbation of the ſoldiers was

[34] Julian himſelf relates (p. 274), with ſome humour, the circumſtances of his own metamorphoſis, his downcaſt looks, and his perplexity at being thus ſuddenly tranſported into a new world, where every object appeared ſtrange and hoſtile.

[35] See Ammian. Marcellin. l. xv. c. 8. Zoſimus, l. iii. p. 139. Aurelius Victor. Victor Junior in Epitom. Eutrop. x. 14.

teſtified

CHAP. XIX.

teſtified by a reſpectful murmur: they gazed on the manly countenance of Julian, and obſerved with pleaſure, that the fire which ſparkled in his eyes was tempered by a modeſt bluſh, on being thus expoſed, for the firſt time, to the public view of mankind. As ſoon as the ceremony of his inveſtiture had been performed, Conſtantius addreſſed him with the tone of authority, which his ſuperior age and ſtation permitted him to aſſume; and exhorting the new Cæſar to deſerve, by heroic deeds, that ſacred and immortal name, the emperor gave his colleague the ſtrongeſt aſſurances of a friendſhip which ſhould never be impaired by time, nor interrupted by their ſeparation into the moſt diſtant climates. As ſoon as the ſpeech was ended, the troops, as a token of applauſe, claſhed their ſhields againſt their knees [36]; while the officers who ſurrounded the tribunal expreſſed, with decent reſerve, their ſenſe of the merits of the repreſentative of Conſtantius.

and declared Cæſar, A.D. 355, Nov. 6.

The two princes returned to the palace in the ſame chariot; and during the ſlow proceſſion, Julian repeated to himſelf a verſe of his favourite Homer, which he might equally apply to his fortune and to his fears [37]. The four-and-twenty

[36] Militares omnes horrendo fragore ſcuta genibus illidentes; quod eſt proſperitatis indicium plenum; nam contra cum haſtis clypei feriuntur, iræ documentum eſt et doloris. . . . Ammianus adds, with a nice diſtinction, Eumque ut potiori reverentia ſervaretur, nec ſupra modum laudabant nec infra quam decebat.

[37] Ελλαδι τοι φυγιον θωατοιο, και μοιρα κραταιη. The word *purple*, which Homer had uſed as a vague but common epithet for death, was applied by Julian to expreſs, very aptly, the nature and object of his own apprehenſions.

8 days

days which the Cæſar ſpent at Milan after his inveſtiture, and the firſt months of his Gallic reign, were devoted to a ſplendid, but ſevere captivity; nor could the acquiſition of honour compenſate for the loſs of freedom [18]. His ſteps were watched, his correſpondence was intercepted; and he was obliged, by prudence, to decline the viſits of his moſt intimate friends. Of his former domeſtics, four only were permitted to attend him; two pages, his phyſician, and his librarian; the laſt of whom was employed in the care of a valuable collection of books, the gift of the empreſs, who ſtudied the inclinations as well as the intereſt of her friend. In the room of theſe faithful ſervants, an houſehold was formed, ſuch indeed as became the dignity of a Cæſar: but it was filled with a crowd of ſlaves, deſtitute, and perhaps incapable of any attachment for their new maſter, to whom, for the moſt part, they were either unknown or ſuſpected. His want of experience might require the aſſiſtance of a wiſe counſel; but the minute inſtructions which regulated the ſervice of his table, and the diſtribution of his hours, were adapted to a youth ſtill under the diſcipline of his præceptors, rather than to the ſituation of a prince entruſted with the conduct of an im-

CHAP. XIX.

[18] He repreſents, in the moſt path-tic terms (p. 277.), the diſtreſs of his new ſituation. The proviſion for his table was however ſo elegant and ſumptuous, that the young philoſopher rejected it with diſdain. Quum legeret libellum aſſiduè, quem Conſtantius ut privignum ad ſtudia mittens manû ſuâ conſcripſerat, prælicenter diſponens quid in convivio Cæſaris impendi deberet, Phaſianum, et vulvam et ſumen exigi vetuit et inferri. Ammian. Marcellin l. xvi. c. 5.

portant

CHAP. XIX.

portant war. If he aſpired to deſerve the eſteem of his ſubjects, he was checked by the fear of diſpleaſing his ſovereign; and even the fruits of his marriage-bed were blaſted by the jealous artifices of Euſebia [39] herſelf, who, on this occaſion alone, ſeems to have been unmindful of the tenderneſs of her ſex, and the generoſity of her character. The memory of his father and of his brothers reminded Julian of his own danger, and his apprehenſions were increaſed by the recent and unworthy fate of Sylvanus. In the ſummer which preceded his own elevation, that general had been choſen to deliver Gaul from the tyranny of the Barbarians; but Sylvanus ſoon diſcovered that he had left his moſt dangerous enemies in the Imperial court. A dexterous informer, countenanced by ſeveral of the principal miniſters, procured from him ſome recommendatory letters; and erazing the whole of the contents, except the ſignature, filled up the vacant parchment with matters of high and treaſonable import. By the induſtry and courage of his friends, the fraud was however detected, and in a great council of the

Fatal end of Sylvanus, A. D. 355, September.

[39] If we recollect that Conſtantine, the father of Helena, died above eighteen years before in a mature old age, it will appear probable, that the daughter, though a virgin, could not be very young at the time of her marriage. She was ſoon afterwards delivered of a ſon, who died immediately, quòd obſtetrix corrupta mercede, mox natum præfecto pluſquam convenerat umbilico necavit. She accompanied the emperor and empreſs in their journey to Rome, and the latter, quæſitum venenum bibere per fraudem illexit, ut quotieſcunque concepiſſet, immaturum abjiceret partum. Ammian. l. xvi. c. 10. Our phyſicians will determine whether there exiſts ſuch a poiſon. For my own part, I am inclined to hope that the public malignity imputed the effects of accident as the guilt of Euſebia.

civil

civil and military officers, held in the preſence of the emperor himſelf, the innocence of Sylvanus was publicly acknowledged. But the diſcovery came too late; the report of the calumny and the haſty ſeizure of his eſtate, had already provoked the indignant chief to the rebellion of which he was ſo unjuſtly accuſed. He aſſumed the purple at his head-quarters of Cologne, and his active powers appeared to menace Italy with an invaſion, and Milan with a ſiege. In this emergency, Urſicinus, a general of equal rank, regained, by an act of treachery, the favour which he had loſt by his eminent ſervices in the Eaſt. Exaſperated, as he might ſpecioufly allege, by injuries of a ſimilar nature, he haſtened with a few followers to join the ſtandard, and to betray the confidence, of his too credulous friend. After a reign of only twenty-eight days, Sylvanus was aſſaſſinated: the ſoldiers who, without any criminal intention, had blindly followed the example of their leader, immediately returned to their allegiance; and the flatterers of Conſtantius celebrated the wiſdom and felicity of the monarch who had extinguiſhed a civil war without the hazard of a battle [40].

Conſtantius viſits Rome. A. D. 357, April 28.

The protection of the Rhætian frontier, and the perſecution of the Catholic church, detained Conſtantius in Italy above eighteen months after the departure of Julian. Before the emperor returned into the Eaſt, he indulged his pride and

[40] Ammianus (xv. 5.) was perfectly well informed of the conduct and fate of Sylvanus. He himſelf was one of the few followers who attended Urſicinus in his dangerous enterpriſe.

CHAP. XIX.

curiosity in a visit to the ancient capital [41]. He proceeded from Milan to Rome along the Æmilian and Flaminian ways; and as soon as he approached within forty miles of the city, the march of a prince who had never vanquished a foreign enemy, assumed the appearance of a triumphal procession. His splendid train was composed of all the ministers of luxury; but in a time of profound peace, he was encompassed by the glittering arms of the numerous squadrons of his guards and cuirassiers. Their streaming banners of silk, embossed with gold, and shaped in the form of dragons, waved round the person of the emperor. Constantius sat alone in a lofty car resplendent with gold and precious gems; and, except when he bowed his head to pass under the gates of the cities, he affected a stately demeanour of inflexible, and, as it might seem, of insensible gravity. The severe discipline of the Persian youth had been introduced by the eunuchs into the Imperial palace; and such were the habits of patience which they had inculcated, that, during a slow and sultry march, he was never seen to move his hand towards his face, or to turn his eyes either to the right or to the left. He was received by the magistrates and senate of Rome; and the emperor surveyed, with attention, the civil honours of the republic, and the consular images of the noble families. The streets were lined

[41] For the particulars of the visit of Constantius to Rome, see Ammianus, l. xvi. c. 10. We have only to add, that Themistius was appointed deputy from Constantinople, and that he composed his fourth oration for this ceremony.

with

CHAP. XIX.

with an innumerable multitude. Their repeated acclamations expreſſed their joy at beholding, after an abſence of thirty-two years, the ſacred perſon of their ſovereign; and Conſtantius himſelf expreſſed, with ſome pleaſantry, his affected ſurpriſe that the human race ſhould thus ſuddenly be collected on the ſame ſpot. The ſon of Conſtantine was lodged in the ancient palace of Auguſtus: he preſided in the ſenate, harangued the people from the tribunal which Cicero had ſo often aſcended, aſſiſted with unuſual courteſy at the games of the Circus, and accepted the crowns of gold, as well as the panegyrics which had been prepared for the ceremony by the deputies of the principal cities. His ſhort viſit of thirty days was employed in viewing the monuments of art and power, which were ſcattered over the ſeven hills and the interjacent valleys. He admired the awful majeſty of the capitol, the vaſt extent of the baths of Caracalla and Diocletian, the ſevere ſimplicity of the pantheon, the maſſy greatneſs of the amphitheatre of Titus, the elegant architecture of the theatre of Pompey and the Temple of Peace, and, above all, the ſtately ſtructure of the Forum and column of Trajan; acknowledging, that the voice of fame, ſo prone to invent and to magnify, had made an inadequate report of the metropolis of the world. The traveller, who has contemplated the ruins of ancient Rome, may conceive ſome imperfect idea of the ſentiments which they muſt have inſpired when they reared their heads in the ſplendour of unſullied beauty.

CHAP. XIX.

A new obeliſk.

The ſatisfaction which Conſtantius had received from this journey excited him to the generous emulation of beſtowing on the Romans ſome memorial of his own gratitude and munificence. His firſt idea was to imitate the equeſtrian and coloſſal ſtatue which he had ſeen in the Forum of Trajan; but when he had maturely weighed the difficulties of the execution[42], he choſe rather to embelliſh the capital by the gift of an Egyptian obeliſk. In a remote but poliſhed age, which ſeems to have preceded the invention of alphabetical writing, a great number of theſe obeliſks had been erected, in the cities of Thebes and Heliopolis, by the ancient ſovereigns of Egypt, in a juſt confidence that the ſimplicity of their form, and the hardneſs of their ſubſtance, would reſiſt the injuries of time and violence[43]. Several of theſe extraordinary columns had been tranſported to Rome by Auguſtus and his ſucceſſors, as the moſt durable monuments of their power and victory[44]; but there remained one obeliſk,

[42] Hormiſdas, a fugitive prince of Perſia, obſerved to the emperor, that if he made ſuch a horſe, he muſt think of preparing a ſimilar ſtable (the Forum of Trajan). Another ſaying of Hormiſdas is recorded, "that one thing only had *diſpleaſed* him, to find "that men died at Rome as well as elſewhere." If we adopt this reading of the text of Ammianus (*diſplicuiſſe* inſtead of *placuiſſe*), we may conſider it as a reproof of Roman vanity. The contrary ſenſe would be that of a miſanthrope.

[43] When Germanicus viſited the ancient monuments of Thebes, the eldeſt of the prieſts explained to him the meaning of theſe hieroglyphics. Tacit. Annal. ii. c. 60. But it ſeems probable, that before the uſeful invention of an alphabet, theſe natural or arbitrary ſigns were the common characters of the Egyptian nation. See Warburton's Divine Legation of Moſes, vol. iii. p. 69—243.

[44] See Plin. Hiſt. Natur. l. xxxvi. c. 14, 15.

which,

CHAP. XIX.

which, from its size or sanctity, escaped for a long time the rapacious vanity of the conquerors. It was designed by Constantine to adorn his new city[45]; and, after being removed by his order from the pedestal where it stood before the Temple of the Sun at Heliopolis, was floated down the Nile to Alexandria. The death of Constantine suspended the execution of his purpose, and this obelisk was destined by his son to the ancient capital of the empire. A vessel of uncommon strength and capaciousness was provided to convey this enormous weight of granite, at least an hundred and fifteen feet in length, from the banks of the Nile to those of the Tyber. The obelisk of Constantius was landed about three miles from the city, and elevated, by the efforts of art and labour, in the great Circus of Rome[46].

The Quadian and Sarmatian war, A. D. 357, 358, 359.

The departure of Constantius from Rome was hastened by the alarming intelligence of the distress and danger of the Illyrian provinces. The distractions of civil war, and the irreparable loss which the Roman legions had sustained in the battle of Mursa, exposed those countries, almost without defence, to the light cavalry of

45 Ammian. Marcellin. l. xvii. c. 4. He gives us a Greek interpretation of the hieroglyphics, and his commentator Lindenbrogius adds a Latin inscription, which, in twenty verses of the age of Constantius, contain a short history of the obelisk.

46 See Donat. Roma Antiqua. l. iii. c. 14. l. iv. c. 12. and the learned, though confused, Dissertation of Bargæus on Obelisks, inserted in the fourth volume of Grævius's Roman Antiquities, p. 1897—1936. This Dissertation is dedicated to Pope Sixtus V. who erected the obelisk of Constantius in the square before the patriarchal church of St. John Lateran.

CHAP. XIX.

the Barbarians; and particularly to the inroads of the Quadi, a fierce and powerful nation, who ſeem to have exchanged the inſtitutions of Germany for the arms and military arts of their Sarmatian allies [47]. The garriſons of the frontier were inſufficient to check their progreſs; and the indolent monarch was at length compelled to aſſemble, from the extremities of his dominions, the flower of the Palatine troops, to take the field in perſon, and to employ a whole campaign, with the preceding autumn and the enſuing ſpring, in the ſerious proſecution of the war. The emperor paſſed the Danube on a bridge of boats, cut in pieces all that encountered his march, penetrated into the heart of the country of the Quadi, and ſeverely retaliated the calamities which they had inflicted on the Roman province. The diſmayed Barbarians were ſoon reduced to ſue for peace: they offered the reſtitution of his captive ſubjects, as an atonement for the paſt, and the nobleſt hoſtages as a pledge of their future conduct. The generous courteſy which was ſhewn to the firſt among their chieftains who implored the clemency of Conſtantius, encouraged the more timid, or the more obſtinate, to imitate their example; and the Imperial camp was crowded with the princes and ambaſſadors of the moſt diſtant tribes, who occupied the plains of the Leſſer Poland, and who might have deemed themſelves ſecure behind the lofty ridge of the Carpathian mountains. While Conſtantius gave

47 The events of this Quadian and Sarmatian war are related by Ammianus, xvi. 10. xvii. 12, 13. xix. 11.

laws to the Barbarians beyond the Danube, he diſtinguiſhed with ſpecious compaſſion the Sarmatian exiles, who had been expelled from their native country by the rebellion of their ſlaves, and who formed a very conſiderable acceſſion to the power of the Quadi. The emperor, embracing a generous but artful ſyſtem of policy, releaſed the Sarmatians from the bands of this humiliating dependence, and reſtored them, by a ſeparate treaty, to the dignity of a nation united under the government of a king, the friend and ally of the republic. He declared his reſolution of aſſerting the juſtice of their cauſe, and of ſecuring the peace of the provinces by the extirpation, or at leaſt the baniſhment, of the Limigantes, whoſe manners were ſtill infected with the vices of their ſervile origin. The execution of this deſign was attended with more difficulty than glory. The territory of the Limigantes was protected againſt the Romans by the Danube, againſt the hoſtile Barbarians by the Teyſs.. The marſhy lands which lay between thoſe rivers, and were often covered by their inundations, formed an intricate wilderneſs pervious only to the inhabitants, who were acquainted with its ſecret paths and inacceſſible fortreſſes. On the approach of Conſtantius, the Limigantes tried the efficacy of prayers, of fraud, and of arms; but he ſternly rejected their ſupplications, defeated their rude ſtratagems, and repelled with ſkill and firmneſs the efforts of their irregular valour. One of their moſt warlike tribes, eſtabliſhed in a ſmall iſland towards the conflux of the Teyſs and the

CHAP. XIX.

Danube, conſented to paſs the river with the intention of ſurpriſing the emperor during the ſecurity of an amicable conference. They ſoon became the victims of the perfidy which they meditated. Encompaſſed on every ſide, trampled down by the cavalry, ſlaughtered by the ſwords of the legions, they diſdained to aſk for mercy; and with an undaunted countenance ſtill graſped their weapons in the agonies of death. After this victory a conſiderable body of Romans was landed on the oppoſite banks of the Danube; the Taifalæ, a Gothic tribe engaged in the ſervice of the empire, invaded the Limigantes on the ſide of the Teyſs; and their former maſters, the free Sarmatians, animated by hope and revenge, penetrated through the hilly country into the heart of their ancient poſſeſſions. A general conflagration revealed the huts of the Barbarians, which were ſeated in the depth of the wilderneſs; and the ſoldier fought with confidence on marſhy ground, which it was dangerous for him to tread. In this extremity the braveſt of the Limigantes were reſolved to die in arms, rather than to yield; but the milder ſentiment, enforced by the authority of their elders, at length prevailed; and the ſuppliant crowd, followed by their wives and children, repaired to the Imperial camp, to learn their fate from the mouth of the conqueror. After celebrating his own clemency, which was ſtill inclined to pardon their repeated crimes, and to ſpare the remnant of a guilty nation, Conſtantius aſſigned for the place of their exile a remote country, where they might enjoy a ſafe and honourable

honourable repoſe. The Limigantes obeyed with reluctance; but before they could reach, at leaſt before they could occupy, their deſtined habitations, they returned to the banks of the Danube, exaggerating the hardſhips of their ſituation, and requeſting, with fervent profeſſions of fidelity, that the emperor would grant them an undiſturbed ſettlement within the limits of the Roman provinces. Inſtead of conſulting his own experience of their incurable perfidy, Conſtantius liſtened to his flatterers, who were ready to repreſent the honour and advantage of accepting a colony of ſoldiers, at a time when it was much eaſier to obtain the pecuniary contributions, than the military ſervice of the ſubjects of the empire. The Limigantes were permitted to paſs the Danube; and the emperor gave audience to the multitude in a large plain near the modern city of Buda. They ſurrounded the tribunal, and ſeemed to hear with reſpect an oration full of mildneſs and dignity; when one of the Barbarians, caſting his ſhoe into the air, exclaimed with a loud voice, *Marha! Marha!* a word of defiance, which was received as the ſignal of the tumult. They ruſhed with fury to ſeize the perſon of the emperor; his royal throne and golden couch were pillaged by theſe rude hands; but the faithful defence of his guards, who died at his feet, allowed him a moment to mount a fleet horſe, and to eſcape from the confuſion. The diſgrace which had been incurred by a treacherous ſurpriſe was ſoon retrieved by the numbers and diſcipline of the Romans; and the combat was only terminated

CHAP. XIX.

by the extinction of the name and nation of the Limigantes. The free Sarmatians were reinſtated in the poſſeſſion of their ancient ſeats; and although Conſtantius diſtruſted the levity of their character, he entertained ſome hopes that a ſenſe of gratitude might influence their future conduct. He had remarked the lofty ſtature and obſequious demeanour of Zizais, one of the nobleſt of their chiefs. He conferred on him the title of King; and Zizais proved that he was not unworthy to reign, by a ſincere and laſting attachment to the intereſt of his benefactor, who, after this ſplendid ſucceſs, received the name of *Sarmaticus* from the acclamations of his victorious army [48].

The Perſian negociation, A. D. 358.

While the Roman emperor and the Perſian monarch, at the diſtance of three thouſand miles, defended their extreme limits againſt the Barbarians of the Danube and of the Oxus, their intermediate frontier experienced the viciſſitudes of a languid war, and a precarious truce. Two of the Eaſtern miniſters of Conſtantius, the Prætorian præfect Muſonian, whoſe abilities were diſgraced by the want of truth and integrity, and Caſſian duke of Meſopotamia, a hardy and veteran ſoldier, opened a ſecret negociation with the Satrap Tamſapor [49]. Theſe overtures of peace, tranſlated into the ſervile and flattering language of Aſia, were tranſmitted to the camp of the Great King; who reſolved to ſignify, by an am-

[48] Genti Sarmatarum magno decori conſidens apud eos regem dedit: Aurelius Victor. In a pompous oration pronounced by Conſtantius himſelf, he expatiates on his own exploits with much vanity, and ſome truth.

[49] Ammian. xvi. 9.

baſſador,

CHAP. XIX.

baſſador, the terms which he was inclined to grant to the ſuppliant Romans. Narſes, whom he inveſted with that character, was honourably received in his paſſage through Antioch and Conſtantinople: he reached Sirmium after a long journey, and, at his firſt audience, reſpectfully unfolded the ſilken veil which covered the haughty epiſtle of his ſovereign. Sapor, King of Kings, and Brother of the Sun and Moon (ſuch were the lofty titles affected by Oriental vanity), expreſſed his ſatisfaction that his brother, Conſtantius Cæſar, had been taught wiſdom by adverſity. As the lawful ſucceſſor of Darius Hyſtaſpes, Sapor aſſerted, that the river Strymon in Macedonia was the true and ancient boundary of his empire; declaring, however, that as an evidence of his moderation, he would content himſelf with the provinces of Armenia and Meſopotamia, which had been fraudulently extorted from his anceſtors. He alleged, that, without the reſtitution of theſe diſputed countries, it was impoſſible to eſtabliſh any treaty on a ſolid and permanent baſis; and he arrogantly threatened, that if his ambaſſador returned in vain, he was prepared to take the field in the ſpring, and to ſupport the juſtice of his cauſe by the ſtrength of his invincible arms. Narſes, who was endowed with the moſt polite and amiable manners, endeavoured, as far as was conſiſtent with his duty, to ſoften the harſhneſs of the meſſage [50]. Both the ſtyle and

[50] Ammianus (xvii. 5.) tranſcribes the haughty letter. Themiſtius (Orat. iv. p. 57. edit. Petav.) takes notice of the ſilk covering.

CHAP. XIX.

and ſubſtance were maturely weighed in the Imperial council, and he was diſmiſſed with the following anſwer: "Conſtantius had a right to "diſclaim the officiouſneſs of his miniſters, who "had acted without any ſpecific orders from the "throne: he was not, however, averſe to an "equal and honourable treaty; but it was highly "indecent, as well as abſurd, to propoſe to the "ſole and victorious emperor of the Roman "world, the ſame conditions of peace which he "had indignantly rejected at the time when his "power was contracted within the narrow limits "of the Eaſt: the chance of arms was uncertain; "and Sapor ſhould recollect, that if the Romans "had ſometimes been vanquiſhed in battle, they "had almoſt always been ſucceſsful in the event "of the war." A few days after the departure of Narſes, three ambaſſadors were ſent to the court of Sapor, who was already returned from the Scythian expedition to his ordinary reſidence of Cteſiphon. A count, a notary, and a ſophiſt, had been ſelected for this important commiſſion; and Conſtantius, who was ſecretly anxious for the concluſion of the peace, entertained ſome hopes that the dignity of the firſt of theſe miniſters, the dexterity of the ſecond, and the rhetoric of the third[51], would perſuade the Perſian monarch to

ing. Idatius and Zonaras mention the journey of the ambaſſador; and Peter the Patrician (in Excerpt. Legat. p. 28.) has informed us of his conciliating behaviour.

[51] Ammianus, xvii. 5. and Valeſius ad loc. The ſophiſt, or philoſopher (in that age theſe words were almoſt ſynonymous), was Euſtathius the Cappadocian, the diſciple of Jamblichus, and the friend of St. Baſil. Eunapius (in Vit. Ædeſii, p. 44—47.) fondly attributes

CHAP. XIX.

to abate the rigour of his demands. But the progreſs of their negociation was oppoſed and defeated by the hoſtile arts of Antoninus [52], a Roman ſubject of Syria, who had fled from oppreſſion, and was admitted into the councils of Sapor, and even to the royal table, where, according to the cuſtom of the Perſians, the moſt important buſineſs was frequently diſcuſſed [53]. The dexterous fugitive promoted his intereſt by the ſame conduct which gratified his revenge. He inceſſantly urged the ambition of his new maſter, to embrace the favourable opportunity when the braveſt of the Palatine troops were employed with the emperor in a diſtant war on the Danube. He preſſed Sapor to invade the exhauſted and defenceleſs provinces of the Eaſt, with the numerous armies of Perſia, now fortified by the alliance and acceſſion of the fierceſt Barbarians. The ambaſſadors of Rome retired without ſucceſs, and a ſecond embaſſy of a ſtill more honourable rank, was detained in ſtrict confinement, and threatened either with death or exile.

attributes to this philoſophic ambaſſador the glory of enchanting the Barbarian king by the perſuaſive charms of reaſon and eloquence. See Tillemont, Hiſt. des Empereurs, tom. iv. p. 828. 1132.

[52] Ammian. xviii. 5, 6. 8. The decent and reſpectful behaviour of Antoninus towards the Roman general ſets him in a very intereſting light; and Ammianus himſelf ſpeaks of the traitor with ſome compaſſion and eſteem.

[53] This circumſtance, as it is noticed by Ammianus, ſerves to prove the veracity of Herodotus (l. i. c. 133.), and the permanency of the Perſian manners. In every age the Perſians have been addicted to intemperance, and the wines of Shiraz have triumphed over the law of Mahomet. Briſſon de Regno Perſ. l. ii. p. 462—472. and Chardin, Voyages en Perſe, tom. iii. p. 90.

The

CHAP. XIX.

Invaſion of Meſopotamia by Sapor, A. D. 359.

The military hiſtorian[54], who was himſelf diſpatched to obſerve the army of the Perſians, as they were preparing to conſtruct a bridge of boats over the Tigris, beheld from an eminence the plain of Aſſyria, as far as the edge of the horizon, covered with men, with horſes, and with arms. Sapor appeared in the front, conſpicuous by the ſplendor of his purple. On his left hand, the place of honour among the Orientals, Grumbates, king of the Chionites, diſplayed the ſtern countenance of an aged and renowned warrior. The monarch had reſerved a ſimilar place on his right hand for the king of the Albanians, who led his independent tribes from the ſhores of the Caſpian. The ſatraps and generals were diſtributed according to their ſeveral ranks, and the whole army, beſides the numerous train of Oriental luxury, conſiſted of more than one hundred thouſand effective men, inured to fatigue, and ſelected from the braveſt nations of Aſia. The Roman deſerter, who in ſome meaſure guided the councils of Sapor, had prudently adviſed, that, inſtead of waſting the ſummer in tedious and difficult ſieges, he ſhould march directly to the Euphrates, and preſs forwards without delay to ſeize the feeble and wealthy metropolis of Syria. But the Perſians were no ſooner advanced into the plains of Meſopotamia, than they diſcovered that every precaution had been uſed which could retard their progreſs, or defeat their deſign. The inhabitants, with their cattle, were ſecured in

[54] Ammian. l. xviii. 6, 7, 8, 10.

places

places of ſtrength, the green forage throughout the country was ſet on fire, the fords of the river were fortified by ſharp ſtakes; military engines were planted on the oppoſite banks, and a ſeaſonable ſwell of the waters of the Euphrates deterred the Barbarians from attempting the ordinary paſſage of the bridge of Thapſacus. Their ſkilful guide, changing his plan of operations, then conducted the army by a longer circuit, but through a fertile territory, towards the head of the Euphrates, where the infant river is reduced to a ſhallow and acceſſible ſtream. Sapor overlooked, with prudent diſdain, the ſtrength of Niſibis; but as he paſſed under the walls of Amida, he reſolved to try whether the majeſty of his preſence would not awe the garriſon into immediate ſubmiſſion. The ſacrilegious inſult of a random dart, which glanced againſt the royal tiara, convinced him of his error; and the indignant monarch liſtened with impatience to the advice of his miniſters, who conjured him not to ſacrifice the ſucceſs of his ambition to the gratification of his reſentment. The following day Grumbates advanced towards the gates with a ſelect body of troops, and required the inſtant ſurrender of the city, as the only atonement which could be accepted for ſuch an act of raſhneſs and inſolence. His propoſals were anſwered by a general diſcharge, and his only ſon, a beautiful and valiant youth, was pierced through the heart by a javelin, ſhot from one of the baliſtæ. The funeral of the prince of the Chionites was celebrated according to the rites of his country; and the grief

CHAP. XIX.

grief of his aged father was alleviated by the ſolemn promiſe of Sapor, that the guilty city of Armida ſhould ſerve as a funeral pile to expiate the death, and to perpetuate the memory, of his ſon.

Siege of Amida.

The ancient city of Amid or Amida [55], which ſometimes aſſumes the provincial appellation of Diarbekir [56], is advantageouſly ſituate in a fertile plain, watered by the natural and artificial channels of the Tigris, of which the leaſt inconſiderable ſtream bends in a ſemicircular form round the eaſtern part of the city. The emperor Conſtantius had recently conferred on Amida the honour of his own name, and the additional fortifications of ſtrong walls and lofty towers. It was provided with an arſenal of military engines, and the ordinary garriſon had been reinforced to the amount of ſeven legions, when the place was inveſted by the arms of Sapor [57]. His firſt and moſt ſanguine hopes depended on the ſucceſs of a general

[55] For the deſcription of Amida, ſee d'Herbelot, Bibliotheque Orientale, p. 108. Hiſtoire de Timur Bec, par Cherefeddin Ali, l. iii. c. 41. Ahmed Arabſiades, tom. i. p. 331. c. 43. Voyages de Tavernier, tom. i. p. 301. Voyages d'Otter, tom. ii. p. 273. and Voyages de Niebuhr, tom. ii. p. 324—328. The laſt of theſe travellers, a learned and accurate Dane, has given a plan of Amida, which illuſtrates the operations of the ſiege.

[56] Diarbekir, which is ſtiled Amid, or Kara-Amid, in the public writings of the Turks, contains above 16,000 houſes, and is the reſidence of a paſha with three tails. The epithet of *Kara* is derived from the *blackneſs* of the ſtone which compoſes the ſtrong and ancient wall of Amida.

[57] The operations of the ſiege of Amida are very minutely deſcribed by Ammianus (xix. 1—9.), who acted an honourable part in the defence, and eſcaped with difficulty when the city was ſtormed by the Perſians.

aſſault.

CHAP. XIX.

assault. To the several nations which followed his standard their respective posts were assigned; the south to the Vertæ, the north to the Albanians, the east to the Chionites, inflamed with grief and indignation; the west to the Segestans, the bravest of his warriors, who covered their front with a formidable line of Indian elephants [58]. The Persians, on every side, supported their efforts, and animated their courage; and the monarch himself, careless of his rank and safety, displayed, in the prosecution of the siege, the ardor of a youthful soldier. After an obstinate combat, the Barbarians were repulsed; they incessantly returned to the charge; they were again driven back with a dreadful slaughter, and two rebel legions of Gauls, who had been banished into the East, signalized their undisciplined courage by a nocturnal sally into the heart of the Persian camp. In one of the fiercest of these repeated assaults, Amida was betrayed by the treachery of a deserter, who indicated to the Barbarians a secret and neglected staircase, scooped out of the rock that hangs over the stream of the Tigris. Seventy chosen archers of the royal guard ascended in silence to the third story of a lofty tower which

[58] Of these four nations, the Albanians are too well known to require any description. The Segestans inhabited a large and level country, which still preserves their name, to the south of Khorasan, and the west of Hindostan (see Geographia Nubiensis, p. 133. and d'Herbelot, Bibliotheque Orientale, p. 797.) Notwithstanding the boasted victory of Bahram (vol. i. p. 410.), the Segestans, above fourscore years afterwards, appear as an independent nation, the ally of Persia. We are ignorant of the situation of the Vertæ and Chionites, but I am inclined to place them (at least the latter) towards the confines of India and Scythia. See Ammian. xvi. 9.

CHAP. XIX.

commanded the precipice; they elevated on high the Perſian banner, the ſignal of confidence to the aſſailants, and of diſmay to the beſieged; and if this devoted band could have maintained their poſt a few minutes longer, the reduction of the place might have been purchaſed by the ſacrifice of their lives. After Sapor had tried, without ſucceſs, the efficacy of force and of ſtratagem, he had recourſe to the ſlower but more certain operations of a regular ſiege, in the conduct of which he was inſtructed by the ſkill of the Roman deſerters. The trenches were opened at a convenient diſtance, and the troops deſtined for that ſervice advanced under the portable cover of ſtrong hurdles, to fill up the ditch, and undermine the foundations of the walls. Wooden towers were at the ſame time conſtructed, and moved forwards on wheels, till the ſoldiers, who were provided with every ſpecies of miſſile weapons, could engage almoſt on level ground with the troops who defended the rampart. Every mode of reſiſtance which art could ſuggeſt, or courage could execute, was employed in the defence of Amida, and the works of Sapor were more than once deſtroyed by the fire of the Romans. But the reſources of a beſieged city may be exhauſted. The Perſians repaired their loſſes, and puſhed their approaches; a large breach was made by the battering ram, and the ſtrength of the garriſon, waſted by the ſword and by diſeaſe, yielded to the fury of the aſſault. The ſoldiers, the citizens, their wives, their children, all who had

had not time to escape through the opposite gate, were involved by the conquerors in a promiscuous massacre. CHAP. XIX.

But the ruin of Amida was the safety of the Roman provinces. As soon as the first transports of victory had subsided, Sapor was at leisure to reflect, that to chastise a disobedient city, he had lost the flower of his troops, and the most favourable season for conquest[59]. Thirty thousand of his veterans had fallen under the walls of Amida, during the continuance of a siege which lasted seventy-three days; and the disappointed monarch returned to his capital with affected triumph and secret mortification. It was more than probable, that the inconstancy of his Barbarian allies was tempted to relinquish a war in which they had encountered such unexpected difficulties; and that the aged king of the Chionites, satiated with revenge, turned away with horror from a scene of action where he had been deprived of the hope of his family and nation. The strength as well as Of Singara, &c. A. D. 360.

[59] Ammianus has marked the chronology of this year by three signs, which do not perfectly coincide with each other, or with the series of the history. 1. The corn was ripe when Sapor invaded Mesopotamia; "Cum jam stipulâ flavente turgerent;" a circumstance, which, in the latitude of Aleppo, would naturally refer us to the month of April or May See Harmer's Observations on Scripture, vol. i. p. 41. Shaw's Travels, p. 335. edit. 4to. 2. The progress of Sapor was checked by the overflowing of the Euphrates, which generally happens in July and August. Plin. Hist. Nat. v. 21. Viaggi di Pietro della Valle, tom. i. p. 696. 3. When Sapor had taken Amida, after a siege of seventy-three days, the autumn was far advanced. "Autumno precipiti hædorumque improbo "fidere extoto." To reconcile these apparent contradictions, we must allow for some delay in the Persian king, some inaccuracy in the historian, and some disorder in the seasons.

CHAP. XIX.

ſpirit of the army with which Sapor took the field in the enſuing ſpring, was no longer equal to the unbounded views of his ambition. Inſtead of aſpiring to the conqueſt of the Eaſt, he was obliged to content himſelf with the reduction of two fortified cities of Meſopotamia, Singara and Bezabde [60]; the one ſituate in the midſt of a ſandy deſert, the other in a ſmall peninſula, ſurrounded almoſt on every ſide by the deep and rapid ſtream of the Tigris. Five Roman legions, of the diminutive ſize, to which they had been reduced in the age of Conſtantine, were made priſoners, and ſent into remote captivity on the extreme confines of Perſia. After diſmantling the walls of Singara, the conqueror abandoned that ſolitary and ſequeſtered place; but he carefully reſtored the fortifications of Bezabde, and fixed in that important poſt a garriſon or colony of veterans; amply ſupplied with every means of defence, and animated by high ſentiments of honour and fidelity. Towards the cloſe of the campaign, the arms of Sapor incurred ſome diſgrace by an unſucceſsful enterpriſe againſt Virtha, or Tecrit, a ſtrong, or as it was univerſally eſteemed till the age of Tamerlane, an impregnable fortreſs of the independent Arabs [61].

[60] The account of theſe ſieges is given by Ammianus, xx. 6, 7.

[61] For the identity of Virtha and Tecrit, ſee d'Anville, Geographie Ancienne, tom. ii. p. 201. For the ſiege of that caſtle by Timur Bec, or Tamerlane, ſee Chereſeddin, l. iii. c. 33. The Perſian biographer exaggerates the merit and difficulty of this exploit, which delivered the caravans of Bagdad from a formidable gang of robbers.

The

CHAP. XIX.

Conduct of the Romans.

The defence of the East against the arms of Sapor, required, and would have exercised, the abilities of the most consummate general; and it seemed fortunate for the state, that it was the actual province of the brave Ursicinus, who alone deserved the confidence of the soldiers and people. In the hour of danger, Ursicinus[62] was removed from his station by the intrigues of the eunuchs; and the military command of the East was bestowed, by the same influence, on Sabinian, a wealthy and subtle veteran, who had attained the infirmities, without acquiring the experience, of age. By a second order, which issued from the same jealous and inconstant counsels, Ursicinus was again dispatched to the frontier of Mesopotamia, and condemned to sustain the labours of a war, the honours of which had been transferred to his unworthy rival. Sabinian fixed his indolent station under the walls of Edessa; and while he amused himself with the idle parade of military exercise, and moved to the sound of flutes in the Pyrrhic dance, the public defence was abandoned to the boldness and diligence of the former general of the East. But whenever Ursicinus recommended any vigorous plan of operations; when he proposed, at the head of a light and active army, to wheel round the foot of the mountains, to intercept the convoys of the enemy, to harass the wide extent of the Persian lines, and to re-

[62] Ammianus (xviii. 5, 6. xix. 3. xx. 2.) represents the merit and disgrace of Ursicinus with that faithful attention which a soldier owed to his general. Some partiality may be suspected, yet the whole account is consistent and probable.

CHAP. XIX.

lieve the diſtreſs of Amida; the timid and envious commander alleged, that he was reſtrained by his poſitive orders from endangering the ſafety of the troops. Amida was at length taken; its braveſt defenders, who had eſcaped the ſword of the Barbarians, died in the Roman camp by the hand of the executioner; and Urſicinus himſelf, after ſupporting the diſgrace of a partial enquiry, was puniſhed for the miſconduct of Sabinian by the loſs of his military rank. But Conſtantius ſoon experienced the truth of the prediction which honeſt indignation had extorted from his injured lieutenant, that as long as ſuch maxims of government were ſuffered to prevail, the emperor himſelf would find it no eaſy taſk to defend his eaſtern dominions from the invaſion of a foreign enemy. When he had ſubdued or pacified the Barbarians of the Danube, Conſtantius proceeded by ſlow marches into the Eaſt; and after he had wept over the ſmoking ruins of Amida, he formed, with a powerful army, the ſiege of Bezabde. The walls were ſhaken by the reiterated efforts of the moſt enormous of the battering-rams; the town was reduced to the laſt extremity; but it was ſtill defended by the patient and intrepid valour of the garriſon, till the approach of the rainy ſeaſon obliged the emperor to raiſe the ſiege, and ingloriouſly to retreat into his winter-quarters at Antioch[63]. The pride of Conſtantius, and the ingenuity

[63] Ammian. xx. 11. Omiſſo vano incepto, hiematurus Antiochiæ redit in Syriam ærumnoſam, perpeſſus et ulcerum ſed et atrocia, diuque deflenda. It is *thus* that James Gronovius has reſtored an obſcure paſſage; and he thinks that this correction alone would have deſerved

CHAP. XIX.

genuity of his courtiers, were at a loſs to diſcover any materials for panegyric in the events of the Perſian war; while the glory of his couſin Julian, to whoſe military command he had entruſted the provinces of Gaul, was proclaimed to the world in the ſimple and conciſe narrative of his exploits.

Invaſion of Gaul by the Germans.

In the blind fury of civil diſcord, Conſtantius had abandoned to the Barbarians of Germany the countries of Gaul, which ſtill acknowledged the authority of his rival. A numerous ſwarm of Franks and Alemanni were invited to croſs the Rhine by preſents and promiſes, by the hopes of ſpoil, and by a perpetual grant of all the territories which they ſhould be able to ſubdue[64]. But the emperor, who for a temporary ſervice had thus imprudently provoked the rapacious ſpirit of the Barbarians, ſoon diſcovered and lamented the difficulty of diſmiſſing theſe formidable allies, after they had taſted the richneſs of the Roman ſoil. Regardleſs of the nice diſtinction of loyalty and rebellion, theſe undiſciplined robbers treated as their natural enemies all the ſubjects of the empire, who poſſeſſed any property which they were deſirous of acquiring. Forty-five flouriſhing cities, Tongres, Cologne, Treves, Worms, Spires, Straſburgh, &c. beſides a far greater number of

deſerved a new edition of his author; whoſe ſenſe may now be darkly perceived. I expected ſome additional light from the recent labours of the learned Erneſtus (Lipſiæ, 1773.).

[64] The ravages of the Germans, and the diſtreſs of Gaul, may be collected from Julian himſelf. Orat. ad S. P. Q. Athen. p. 277. Ammian. xv. 11. Libanius, Orat. x. Zoſimus, l. iii. p. 140. Sozomen, l. iii. c. 1.

CHAP. XIX.

towns and villages, were pillaged, and for the moſt part reduced to aſhes. The Barbarians of Germany, ſtill faithful to the maxims of their anceſtors, abhorred the confinement of walls, to which they applied the odious names of priſons and ſepulchres; and fixing their independent habitations on the banks of rivers, the Rhine, the Moſelle, and the Meuſe, they ſecured themſelves againſt the danger of a ſurpriſe, by a rude and haſty fortification of large trees, which were felled and thrown acroſs the roads. The Alemanni were eſtabliſhed in the modern countries of Alſace and Lorraine; the Franks occupied the iſland of the Batavians, together with an extenſive diſtrict of Brabant, which was then known by the appellation of Toxandria [65], and may deſerve to be conſidered, as the original ſeat of their Gallic monarchy [66]. From the ſources, to the mouth, of the Rhine, the conqueſts of the Germans extended above forty miles to the weſt of that river, over a country peopled by colonies of their own

[65] Ammianus (xvi. 8.). This name ſeems to be derived from the Toxandri of Pliny, and very frequently occurs in the hiſtories of the middle age. Toxandria was a country of woods and moraſſes, which extended from the neighbourhood of Tongres to the conflux of the Vahal and the Rhine. See Valeſius, Notit. Galliar. p. 558.

[66] The paradox of P. Daniel, that the Franks never obtained any permanent ſettlement on this ſide of the Rhine before the time of Clovis, is refuted with much learning and good ſenſe by M. Biet, who has proved, by a chain of evidence, their uninterrupted poſſeſſion of Toxandria one hundred and thirty years before the acceſſion of Clovis. The Diſſertation of M. Biet was crowned by the Academy of Soiſſons, in the year 1736, and ſeems to have been juſtly preferred to the diſcourſe of his more celebrated competitor, the Abbe le Bœuf, an antiquarian, whoſe name was happily expreſſive of his talents.

name

name and nation; and the ſcene of their devaſtations was three times more extenſive than that of their conqueſts. At a ſtill greater diſtance the open towns of Gaul were deſerted, and the inhabitants of the fortified cities, who truſted to their ſtrength and vigilance, were obliged to content themſelves with ſuch ſupplies of corn as they could raiſe on the vacant land within the incloſure of their walls. The diminiſhed legions, deſtitute of pay and proviſions, of arms and diſcipline, trembled at the approach, and even at the name, of the Barbarians.

Conduct of Julian.

Under theſe melancholy circumſtances, an unexperienced youth was appointed to ſave and to govern the provinces of Gaul, or rather, as he expreſſes it himſelf, to exhibit the vain image of Imperial greatneſs. The retired ſcholaſtic education of Julian, in which he had been more converſant with books than with arms, with the dead than with the living, left him in profound ignorance of the practical arts of war and government; and when he awkwardly repeated ſome military exerciſe which it was neceſſary for him to learn, he exclaimed with a ſigh, "O Plato, "Plato, what a taſk for a philoſopher!" Yet even this ſpeculative philoſophy, which men of buſineſs are too apt to deſpiſe, had filled the mind of Julian with the nobleſt precepts, and the moſt ſhining examples; had animated him with the love of virtue, the deſire of fame, and the contempt of death. The habits of temperance recommended in the ſchools, are ſtill more eſſen-

CHAP. XIX.

tial in the ſevere diſcipline of a camp. The ſimple wants of nature regulated the meaſure of his food and ſleep. Rejecting with diſdain the delicacies provided for his table, he ſatisfied his appetite with the coarſe and common fare which was allotted to the meaneſt ſoldiers. During the rigour of a Gallic winter he never ſuffered a fire in his bed-chamber; and after a ſhort and interrupted ſlumber, he frequently roſe in the middle of the night from a carpet ſpread on the floor, to diſpatch any urgent buſineſs, to viſit his rounds, or to ſteal a few moments for the proſecution of his favourite ſtudies[67]. The precepts of eloquence, which he had hitherto practiſed on fancied topics of declamation, were more uſefully applied to excite or to aſſuage the paſſions of an armed multitude: and although Julian, from his early habits of converſation and literature, was more familiarly acquainted with the beauties of the Greek language, he had attained a competent knowledge of the Latin tongue[68]. Since Julian was not originally deſigned for the character of a legiſlator, or a judge, it is probable that the civil juriſprudence of the Romans had not engaged any conſiderable ſhare of his attention: but he

[67] The private life of Julian in Gaul, and the ſevere diſcipline which he embraced, are diſplayed by Ammianus (xvi. 5.), who profeſſes to praiſe, and by Julian himſelf, who affects to ridicule (Misopogon, p. 340.), a conduct, which, in a prince of the houſe of Conſtantine, might juſtly excite the ſurpriſe of mankind.

[68] Aderat Latine quoque differenti ſufficiens ſermo. Ammianus, xvi. 5. But Julian, educated in the ſchools of Greece, always conſidered the language of the Romans as a foreign and popular dialect, which he might uſe on neceſſary occaſions.

derived

derived from his philoſophic ſtudies an inflexible regard for juſtice, tempered by a diſpoſition to clemency; the knowledge of the general principles of equity and evidence, and the faculty of patiently inveſtigating the moſt intricate and tedious queſtions which could be propoſed for his diſcuſſion. The meaſures of policy, and the operations of war, muſt ſubmit to the various accidents of circumſtance and character, and the unpractiſed ſtudent will often be perplexed in the application of the moſt perfect theory. But in the acquiſition of this important ſcience, Julian was aſſiſted by the active vigour of his own genius, as well as by the wiſdom and experience of Salluſt, an officer of rank, who ſoon conceived a ſincere attachment for a prince ſo worthy of his friendſhip; and whoſe incorruptible integrity was adorned by the talent of inſinuating the harſheſt truths, without wounding the delicacy of a royal ear [69].

CHAP. XX.

Immediately after Julian had received the purple at Milan, he was ſent into Gaul, with a feeble retinue of three hundred and ſixty ſoldiers. At Vienna, where he paſſed a painful and anxious winter, in the hands of thoſe miniſters to whom Conſtantius had entruſted the direction of his conduct, the Cæſar was informed of the ſiege and

His firſt campaign in Gaul, A. D. 356.

[69] We are ignorant of the actual office of this excellent miniſter, whom Julian afterwards created prætect of Gaul. Salluſt was ſpeedily recalled by the jealouſy of the emperor; and we may ſtill read a ſenſible but pedantic diſcourſe (p. 240—252.), in which Julian deplores the loſs of ſo valuable a friend, to whom he acknowledges himſelf indebted for his reputation. See La Bleterie, Preface à la Vie de Jovien, p. 20.

deliverance

CHAP. XIX.

deliverance of Autun. That large and ancient city, protected only by a ruined wall and pusillanimous garrison, was saved by the generous resolution of a few veterans, who resumed their arms for the defence of their country. In his march from Autun, through the heart of the Gallic provinces, Julian embraced with ardour the earliest opportunity of signalizing his courage. At the head of a small body of archers, and heavy cavalry, he preferred the shorter but the more dangerous of two roads; and sometimes eluding, and sometimes resisting the attacks of the Barbarians, who were masters of the field, he arrived with honour and safety at the camp near Rheims, where the Roman troops had been ordered to assemble. The aspect of their young prince revived the drooping spirit of the soldiers, and they marched from Rheims in search of the enemy, with a confidence which had almost proved fatal to them. The Alemanni, familiarized to the knowledge of the country, secretly collected their scattered forces, and seizing the opportunity of a dark and rainy day, poured with unexpected fury on the rear-guard of the Romans. Before the inevitable disorder could be remedied, two legions were destroyed; and Julian was taught by experience, that caution and vigilance are the most important lessons of the art of war. In a second and more successful action, he recovered and established his military fame; but as the agility of the Barbarians saved them from the pursuit, his victory was neither bloody nor decisive. He advanced, however, to the banks of the Rhine, surveyed

CHAP. XIX.

ſurveyed the ruins of Cologne, convinced himſelf of the difficulties of the war, and retreated on the approach of winter, diſcontented with the court, with his army, and with his own ſucceſs [70]. The power of the enemy was yet unbroken; and the Cæſar had no ſooner ſeparated his troops, and fixed his own quarters at Sens, in the centre of Gaul, than he was ſurrounded and beſieged by a numerous hoſt of Germans. Reduced in this extremity to the reſources of his own mind, he diſplayed a prudent intrepidity which compenſated for all the deficiences of the place and garriſon; and the Barbarians, at the end of thirty days, were obliged to retire with diſappointed rage.

His ſecond campaign, A. D. 357.

The conſcious pride of Julian, who was indebted only to his ſword for this ſignal deliverance, was embittered by the reflection, that he was abandoned, betrayed, and perhaps devoted to deſtruction, by thoſe who were bound to aſſiſt him by every tie of honour and fidelity. Marcellus, maſter-general of the cavalry in Gaul, interpreting too ſtrictly the jealous orders of the court, beheld with ſupine indifference the diſtreſs of Julian, and had reſtrained the troops under his command from marching to the relief of Sens. If the Cæſar had diſſembled in ſilence ſo dangerous an inſult, his perſon and authority would have been expoſed to the contempt of the world; and if an action ſo criminal had been ſuffered to paſs

[70] Ammianus (xvi. 2, 3.) appears much better ſatisfied with the ſucceſs of this firſt campaign than Julian himſelf; who very fairly owns that he did nothing of conſequence, and that he fled before the enemy.

CHAP. XIX.

with impunity, the emperor would have confirmed the ſuſpicions, which received a very ſpecious colour from his paſt conduct towards the princes of the Flavian family. Marcellus was recalled, and gently diſmiſſed from his office[71]. In his room Severus was appointed general of the cavalry; an experienced ſoldier, of approved courage and fidelity, who could adviſe with reſpect, and execute with zeal; and who ſubmitted, without reluctance, to the ſupreme command which Julian, by the intereſt of his patroneſs Euſebia, at length obtained over the armies of Gaul[72]. A very judicious plan of operations was adopted for the approaching campaign. Julian himſelf, at the head of the remains of the veteran bands, and of ſome new levies which he had been permitted to form, boldly penetrated into the centre of the German cantonments, and carefully re-eſtabliſhed the fortifications of Saverne, in an advantageous poſt, which would either check the incurſions, or intercept the retreat, of the enemy. At the ſame time Barbatio, general of the infantry, advanced from Milan with an army of thirty thouſand men, and paſſing the mountains, prepared to throw a bridge over the Rhine, in the neighbourhood of Baſil. It was reaſonable to expect that the Alemanni, preſſed on either ſide by the Roman arms,

[71] Ammian. xvi. 7. Libanius ſpeaks rather more advantageouſly of the military talents of Marcellus, Orat. x. p. 272. And Julian inſinuates, that he would not have been ſo eaſily recalled, unleſs he had given other reaſons of offence to the court, p. 278.

[72] Severus, non diſcors, non arrogans, ſed longa militiæ frugalitate compertus; et eum recta præeuntem ſecuturus, ut ductorem morigerus miles. Ammian. xvi. 11. Zoſimus, l. iii. p. 140.

would

CHAP. XIX.

would ſoon be forced to evacuate the provinces of Gaul, and to haſten to the defence of their native country. But the hopes of the campaign were defeated by the incapacity, or the envy, or the ſecret inſtructions, of Barbatio; who acted as if he had been the enemy of the Cæſar, and the ſecret ally of the Barbarians. The negligence with which he permitted a troop of pillagers freely to paſs, and to return almoſt before the gates of his camp, may be imputed to his want of abilities; but the treaſonable act of burning a number of boats, and a ſuperfluous ſtock of proviſions, which would have been of the moſt eſſential ſervice to the army of Gaul, was an evidence of his hoſtile and criminal intentions. The Germans deſpiſed an enemy who appeared deſtitute either of power or of inclination to offend them; and the ignominious retreat of Barbatio deprived Julian of the expected ſupport; and left him to extricate himſelf from a hazardous ſituation, where he could neither remain with ſafety, nor retire with honour [73].

Battle of Straſburgh, A. D. 357, Auguſt.

As ſoon as they were delivered from the fears of invaſion, the Alemanni prepared to chaſtiſe the Roman youth, who preſumed to diſpute the poſſeſſion of that country, which they claimed as their own by the right of conqueſt and of treaties. They employed three days, and as many nights, in tranſporting over the Rhine their military powers. The fierce Chnodomar, ſhaking the

[73] On the deſign and failure of the co-operation between Julian and Barbatio, ſee Ammianus (xvi. 11.), and Libanius, Orat. x. p. 273.

ponderous

CHAP. XIX.

ponderous javelin, which he had victoriously wielded againſt the brother of Magnentius, led the van of the Barbarians, and moderated by his experience the martial ardour which his example inſpired [74]. He was followed by ſix other kings, by ten princes of regal extraction, by a long train of high-ſpirited nobles, and by thirty-five thouſand of the braveſt warriors of the tribes of Germany. The confidence derived from the view of their own ſtrength, was encreaſed by the intelligence which they received from a deſerter, that the Cæſar, with a feeble army of thirteen thouſand men, occupied a poſt about one-and-twenty miles from their camp of Straſburgh. With this inadequate force, Julian reſolved to ſeek and to encounter the Barbarian hoſt; and the chance of a general action was preferred to the tedious and uncertain operation of ſeparately engaging the diſperſed parties of the Alemanni. The Romans marched in cloſe order, and in two columns, the cavalry on the right, the infantry on the left; and the day was ſo far ſpent when they appeared in ſight of the enemy, that Julian was deſirous of deferring the battle till the next morning, and of allowing his troops to recruit their exhauſted ſtrength by the neceſſary refreſhments of ſleep and food. Yielding, however, with ſome reluctance,

[74] Ammianus (xvi. 12.) deſcribes, with his inflated eloquence, the figure and character of Chnodomar. Audax et fidens ingenti robore lacertorum, ubi ardor prœlii ſperabatur immanis, equo ſpumante, ſublimior, erectus in jaculum formidandæ vaſtitatis, armorumque nitore conſpicuus: antea ſtrenuus et miles, et utilis præter cæteros ductor. . . . . Dicentium Cæſarem ſuperavit æquo marte congreſſus.

to

CHAP. XIX.

to the clamours of the ſoldiers, and even to the opinion of his council, he exhorted them to juſtify by their valour the eager impatience, which, in caſe of a defeat, would be univerſally branded with the epithets of raſhneſs and preſumption. The trumpets ſounded, the military ſhout was heard through the field, and the two armies ruſhed with equal fury to the charge. The Cæſar, who conducted in perſon his right wing, depended on the dexterity of his archers, and the weight of his cuiraſſiers. But his ranks were inſtantly broken by an irregular mixture of light-horſe and of light-infantry, and he had the mortification of beholding the flight of ſix hundred of his moſt renowned cuiraſſiers [75]. The fugitives were ſtopped and rallied by the preſence and authority of Julian, who, careleſs of his own ſafety, threw himſelf before them, and urging every motive of ſhame and honour, led them back againſt the victorious enemy. The conflict between the two lines of infantry was obſtinate and bloody. The Germans poſſeſſed the ſuperiority of ſtrength and ſtature, the Romans that of diſcipline and temper; and as the Barbarians, who ſerved under the ſtandard of the empire, united the reſpective advantages of both parties, their ſtrenuous efforts, guided by a ſkilful leader, at length determined the event of the day. The Romans loſt four tribunes, and two hundred and forty-three ſol-

[75] After the battle, Julian ventured to revive the rigour of ancient diſcipline, by expoſing theſe fugitives in female apparel to the deriſion of the whole camp. In the next campaign, theſe troops nobly retrieved their honour. Zoſimus, l. iii. p. 142.

diers,

CHAP. XIX.

diers, in this memorable battle of Straſburgh, ſo glorious to the Cæſar [76], and ſo ſalutary to the afflicted provinces of Gaul. Six thouſand of the Alemanni were ſlain in the field, without including thoſe who were drowned in the Rhine, or transfixed with darts whilſt they attempted to ſwim acroſs the river [77]. Chnodomar himſelf was ſurrounded and taken priſoner, with three of his brave companions, who have devoted themſelves to follow in life or death the fate of their chieftain. Julian received him with military pomp in the council of his officers; and expreſſing a generous pity for the fallen ſtate, diſſembled his inward contempt for the abject humiliation of his captive. Inſtead of exhibiting the vanquiſhed king of the Alemanni, as a grateful ſpectacle to the cities of Gaul, he reſpectfully laid at the feet of the emperor this ſplendid trophy of his victory. Chnodomar experienced an honourable treatment: but the impatient Barbarian could not long

[76] Julian himſelf (ad S. P. Q. Athen. p. 279.) ſpeaks of the battle of Straſburgh with the modeſty of conſcious merit; μαχ- σαμην ουκ ακλεως, ει σως ης εις υμας αδικητ . τ ταυτην μαχην. Zoſimus compares it with the victory of Alexander over Darius; and yet we are at a loſs to diſcover any of thoſe ſtrokes of military genius which fix the attention of ages on the conduct and ſucceſs of a ſingle day.

[77] Ammianus, xvi. 12. Libanius adds 2000 more to the number of the ſlain (Orat. x. p. 274.). But theſe trifling differences diſappear before the 60,000 Barbarians, whom Zoſimus has ſacrificed to the glory of his hero. (l. iii. p. 141.) We might attribute this extravagant number to the careleſſneſs of tranſcribers, if this credulous or partial hiſtorian had not ſwelled the army of 5,000 Alemanni to an innumerable multitude of Barbarians, πληθος ανωριθμον βαρβαρων. It is our own fault if this detection does not inſpire us with proper diſtruſt on ſimilar occaſions.

ſurvive

CHAP. XIX.

survive his defeat, his confinement, and his exile [78].

Julian subdues the Franks, A.D. 358.

After Julian had repulsed the Alemanni from the provinces of the Upper Rhine, he turned his arms against the Franks, who were seated nearer to the ocean on the confines of Gaul and Germany; and who, from their numbers, and still more from their intrepid valour, had ever been esteemed the most formidable of the Barbarians [79]. Although they were strongly actuated by the allurements of rapine, they professed a disinterested love of war; which they considered as the supreme honour and felicity of human nature; and their minds and bodies were so completely hardened by perpetual action, that, according to the lively expression of an orator, the snows of winter were as pleasant to them as the flowers of spring. In the month of December, which followed the battle of Strasburg, Julian attacked a body of six hundred Franks, who had thrown themselves into two castles on the Meuse [80]. In the midst of that severe season they sustained, with inflexible constancy, a siege of fifty-four days; till at length, exhausted by hunger, and satisfied that the vigilance of the enemy in breaking the ice of the river, left them no hopes of escape, the

[78] Ammian. xvi. 12. Libanius, Orat. x. p. 276.

[79] Libanius (Orat. iii. p. 137.) draws a very lively picture of the manners of the Franks.

[80] Ammianus, xvii. 2. Libanius, Orat. x. p. 278. The Greek orator, by misapprehending a passage of Julian, has been induced to represent the Franks as consisting of a thousand men; and as his head was always full of the Peloponnesian war, he compares them to the Lacedæmonians, who were besieged and taken in the island of Sphacteria.

CHAP. XIX.

Franks conſented, for the firſt time, to diſpenſe with the ancient law which commanded them to conquer or to die. The Cæſar immediately ſent his captives to the court of Conſtantius, who accepting them as a valuable preſent [81], rejoiced in the opportunity of adding ſo many heroes to the choiceſt troops of his domeſtic guards. The obſtinate reſiſtance of this handful of Franks, appriſed Julian of the difficulties of the expedition which he meditated for the enſuing ſpring, againſt the whole body of the nation. His rapid diligence ſurpriſed and aſtoniſhed the active Barbarians. Ordering his ſoldiers to provide themſelves with biſcuit for twenty days, he ſuddenly pitched his camp near Tongres, while the enemy ſtill ſuppoſed him in his winter-quarters of Paris, expecting the ſlow arrival of his convoys from Aquitain. Without allowing the Franks to unite or to deliberate, he ſkilfully ſpread his legions from Cologne to the ocean; and by the terror, as well as by the ſucceſs of his arms, ſoon reduced the ſuppliant tribes to implore the clemency, and to obey the commands, of their conqueror. The Chamavians ſubmiſſively retired to their former habitations beyond the Rhine: but the Salians were permitted to poſſeſs their new eſtabliſhment of Toxandria, as the ſubjects and

[81] Julian. ad S. P. Q. Athen. p. 280. Libanius, Orat. x. p. 278. According to the expreſſion of Libanius, the emperor δωρα νομιζει which la Bleterie underſtands (Vie de Julien, p. 118.) as an honeſt confeſſion, and Valeſius (ad Ammian. xvii. 2.) as a mean evaſion, of the truth. Dom. Bouquet (Hiſtoriens de France, tom. i. p. 733.), by ſubſtituting another word, νομισι, would ſuppreſs both the difficulty and the ſpirit of this paſſage.

auxiliaries

CHAP. XIX.

auxiliaries of the Roman empire[82]. The treaty was ratified by ſolemn oaths; and perpetual inſpectors were appointed to reſide among the Franks, with the authority of enforcing the ſtrict obſervance of the conditions. An incident is related, intereſting enough in itſelf, and by no means repugnant to the character of Julian, who ingeniouſly contrived both the plot and the cataſtrophe of the tragedy. When the Chamavians ſued for peace, he required the ſon of their king, as the only hoſtage in whom he could rely. A mournful ſilence interrupted by tears and groans, declared the ſad perplexity of the Barbarians; and their aged chief lamented in pathetic language, that his private loſs was now embittered by a ſenſe of the public calamity. While the Chamavians lay proſtrate at the foot of his throne, the royal captive, whom they believed to have been ſlain, unexpectedly appeared before their eyes; and as ſoon as the tumult of joy was huſhed into attention, the Cæſar addreſſed the aſſembly in the following terms: "Behold the ſon, the "prince, whom you wept. You had loſt him "by your fault. God and the Romans have "reſtored him to you. I ſhall ſtill preſerve and "educate the youth, rather as a monument of "my own virtue, than as a pledge of your ſin-"cerity. Should you preſume to violate the

[82] Ammian. xvii. 8. Zoſimus, l. iii. p. 146—150. (his narrative is darkened by a mixture of fable); and Julian. ad S. P. Q. Athen. p. 280. His expreſſion, ὑπεδεξάμην μὲν μοῖραν τῶν Σαλίων ἔθνους, χαμαιζῆς δὲ ἐρήμου. This difference of treatment confirms the opinion, that the Salian Franks were permitted to retain the ſettlements in Toxandria.

CHAP. XIX.

"faith which you have ſworn, the arms of the "republic will avenge the perfidy, not on the "innocent, but on the guilty." The Barbarians withdrew from his preſence, impreſſed with the warmeſt ſentiments of gratitude and admiration [83].

Makes three expeditions beyond the Rhine, A. D. 357, 358. 359.

It was not enough for Julian to have delivered the provinces of Gaul from the Barbarians of Germany. He aſpired to emulate the glory of the firſt and moſt illuſtrious of the emperors; after whoſe example he compoſed his own commentaries of the Gallic war [84]. Cæſar has related, with conſcious pride, the manner in which he *twice* paſſed the Rhine. Julian could boaſt, that before he aſſumed the title of Auguſtus, he had carried the Roman Eagles beyond that great river in *three* ſucceſsful expeditions [85]. The conſternation of the Germans, after the battle of Straſburg, encouraged him to the firſt attempt; and the reluctance of the troops ſoon yielded to the perſuaſive eloquence of a leader, who ſhared the fatigues and dangers which he impoſed on the meaneſt of the ſoldiers. The villages on either

[83] This intereſting ſtory, which Zoſimus has abridged, is related by Eunapius (in Excerpt. Legationum, p. 15, 16, 17.) with all the amplifications of Grecian rhetoric: but the ſilence of Libanius, of Ammianus, and of Julian himſelf, renders the truth of it extremely ſuſpicious.

[84] Libanius, the friend of Julian, clearly inſinuates (Orat. iv. p. 178.) that his hero had compoſed the hiſtory of his Gallic campaigns. But Zoſimus (l. iii. p. 140.) ſeems to have derived his information only from the Orations (λογοι) and the Epiſtles of Julian. The diſcourſe which is addreſſed to the Athenians contains an accurate, though general, account of the war againſt the Germans.

[85] See Ammian. xvii. 1. 10. xviii. 2. and Zoſim. l. iii. p. 144. Julian. ad S. P. Q. Athen. p. 280.

ſide

CHAP. XIX.

ſide of the Meyn, which were plentifully ſtored with corn and cattle, felt the ravages of an invading army. The principal houſes, conſtructed with ſome imitation of Roman elegance, were conſumed by the flames; and the Cæſar boldly advanced about ten miles, till his progreſs was ſtopped by a dark and impenetrable foreſt, undermined by ſubterraneous paſſages, which threatened, with ſecret ſnares and ambuſh, every ſtep of the aſſailant. The ground was already covered with ſnow; and Julian, after repairing an ancient caſtle which had been erected by Trajan, granted a truce of ten months to the ſubmiſſive Barbarians. At the expiration of the truce, Julian undertook a ſecond expedition beyond the Rhine, to humble the pride of Surmar and Hortaire, two of the kings of the Alemanni, who had been preſent at the battle of Straſburg. They promiſed to reſtore all the Roman captives who yet remained alive; and as the Cæſar had procured an exact account from the cities and villages of Gaul, of the inhabitants whom they had loſt, he detected every attempt to deceive him with a degree of readineſs and accuracy, which almoſt eſtabliſhed the belief of his ſupernatural knowledge. His third expedition was ſtill more ſplendid and important than the two former. The Germans had collected their military powers, and moved along the oppoſite banks of the river, with a deſign of deſtroying the bridge, and of preventing the paſſage of the Romans. But this judicious plan of defence was diſconcerted by a ſkilful diverſion. Three hundred light armed and active ſoldiers

CHAP. XIX.

were detached in forty ſmall boats, to fall down the ſtream in ſilence, and to land at ſome diſtance from the poſts of the enemy. They executed their orders with ſo much boldneſs and celerity, that they had almoſt ſurpriſed the Barbarian chiefs, who returned in the fearleſs confidence of intoxication from one of their nocturnal feſtivals. Without repeating the uniform and diſguſting tale of ſlaughter and devaſtation, it is ſufficient to obſerve, that Julian dictated his own conditions of peace to ſix of the haughtieſt kings of the Alemanni, three of whom were permitted to view the ſevere diſcipline and martial pomp of a Roman camp. Followed by twenty thouſand captives, whom he had reſcued from the chains of the Barbarians, the Cæſar repaſſed the Rhine, after terminating a war, the ſucceſs of which has been compared to the ancient glories of the Punic and Cimbric victories.

Reſtores the cities of Gaul.

As ſoon as the valour and conduct of Julian had ſecured an interval of peace, he applied himſelf to a work more congenial to his humane and philoſophic temper. The cities of Gaul, which had ſuffered from the inroads of the Barbarians, he diligently repaired; and ſeven important poſts, between Mentz and the mouth of the Rhine, are particularly mentioned, as having been rebuilt and fortified by the order of Julian [86]. The vanquiſhed

[86] Ammian. xviii. 2. Libanius, Orat. x. p. 279, 280. Of theſe ſeven poſts, four are at preſent towns of ſome conſequence; Ringen, Andernach, Bonn, and Nuyſs. The other three, Triceſimæ, Quadriburgium, and Caſtra Herculis, or Heraclea, no longer ſubſiſt; but there is room to believe, that, on the ground of Quadriburgium

quiſhed Germans had ſubmitted to the juſt but humiliating condition of preparing and conveying the neceſſary materials. The active zeal of Julian urged the proſecution of the work; and ſuch was the ſpirit which he had diffuſed among the troops, that the auxiliaries themſelves, waving their exemption from any duties of fatigue, contended in the moſt ſervile labours with the diligence of the Roman ſoldiers. It was incumbent on the Cæſar to provide for the ſubſiſtence, as well as for the ſafety, of the inhabitants and of the garriſons. The deſertion of the former, and the mutiny of the latter, muſt have been the fatal and inevitable conſequences of famine. The tillage of the provinces of Gaul had been interrupted by the calamities of war; but the ſcanty harveſts of the continent were ſupplied, by his paternal care, from the plenty of the adjacent iſland. Six hundred large barks, framed in the foreſt of the Ardennes, made ſeveral voyages to the coaſt of Britain; and returning from thence laden with corn, ſailed up the Rhine, and diſtributed their cargoes to the ſeveral towns and fortreſſes along the banks of the river [87]. The arms of Julian had CHAP. XIX.

burgium, the Dutch have conſtructed the fort of Schenk, a name ſo offenſive to the faſtidious delicacy of Boileau. See d'Anville Notice de l'ancienne Gaule, p. 183. Boileau, Epitre iv. and the notes.

[87] We may credit Julian himſelf, Orat. ad S. P. Q. Athenienſem, p. 280. who gives a very particular account of the tranſaction. Zoſimus adds two hundred veſſels more, l. iii. p. 145. If we compute the 600 corn ſhips of Julian at only ſeventy tons each, they were capable of exporting 120,000 quarters (ſee Arbuthnot's Weights and Meaſures, p. 237); and the country which could bear ſo large an exportation, muſt already have attained an improved ſtate of agriculture.

CHAP. XIX.

reſtored a free and ſecure navigation, which Conſtantius had offered to purchaſe at the expence of his dignity, and of a tributary preſent of two thouſand pounds of ſilver. The emperor parſimoniouſly refuſed to his ſoldiers the ſums which he granted with a laviſh and trembling hand to the Barbarians. The dexterity, as well as the firmneſs, of Julian, was put to a ſevere trial, when he took the field with a diſcontented army, which had already ſerved two campaigns, without receiving any regular pay or any extraordinary donative [88].

Civil adminiſtration of Julian.

A tender regard for the peace and happineſs of his ſubjects, was the ruling principle which directed, or ſeemed to direct, the adminiſtration of Julian [89]. He devoted the leiſure of his winter-quarters to the offices of civil government; and affected to aſſume, with more pleaſure, the character of a magiſtrate, than that of a general. Before he took the field, he devolved on the provincial governors, moſt of the public and private cauſes which had been referred to his tribunal; but, on his return, he carefully reviſed their proceedings, mitigated the rigour of the law, and pronounced a ſecond judgment on the judges themſelves. Superior to the laſt temptation of virtuous minds, an indiſcreet and intemperate zeal for juſtice, he reſtrained, with calmneſs and dignity, the warmth of an advocate who proſe-

[88] The troops once broke out into a mutiny, immediately before the ſecond paſſage of the Rhine. Ammian. xvii. 9.

[89] Ammian. xvi. 5. xviii. 1. Mamertinus in Panegyr. Vet. xi. 4.

cuted, for extortion, the preſident of the Narbonneſe province. "Who will ever be found "guilty," exclaimed the vehement Delphidius, "if it be enough to deny?" "and who," replied Julian, "will ever be innocent, if it be ſufficient "to affirm?" In the general adminiſtration of peace and war, the intereſt of the ſovereign is commonly the ſame as that of his people; but Conſtantius would have thought himſelf deeply injured, if the virtues of Julian had defrauded him of any part of the tribute which he extorted from an oppreſſed and exhauſted country. The prince who was inveſted with the enſigns of royalty, might ſometimes preſume to correct the rapacious inſolence of the inferior agents; to expoſe their corrupt arts, and to introduce an equal and eaſier mode of collection. But the management of the finances was more ſafely entruſted to Florentius, Prætorian præfect of Gaul, an effeminate tyrant, incapable of pity or remorſe; and the haughty miniſter complained of the moſt decent and gentle oppoſition, while Julian himſelf was rather inclined to cenſure the weakneſs of his own behaviour. The Cæſar had rejected with abhorrence, a mandate for the levy of an extraordinary tax; a new ſuperdiction, which the præfect had offered for his ſignature; and the faithful picture of the public miſery, by which he had been obliged to juſtify his refuſal, offended the court of Conſtantius. We may enjoy the pleaſure of reading the ſentiments of Julian, as he expreſſes them with warmth and freedom in a letter to one of his moſt intimate friends. After ſtating his

CHAP. XIX.

his own conduct, he proceeds in the following terms: "Was it possible for the disciple of Plato "and Aristotle to act otherwise than I have "done? Could I abandon the unhappy subjects "entrusted to my care? Was I not called upon "to defend them from the repeated injuries of "these unfeeling robbers? A tribune who de- "serts his post is punished with death, and de- "prived of the honours of burial. With what "justice could I pronounce *his* sentence, if, in "the hour of danger, I myself neglected a duty "far more sacred and far more important? God "has placed me in this elevated post; his pro- "vidence will guard and support me. Should I "be condemned to suffer, I shall derive comfort "from the testimony of a pure and upright con- "science. Would to heaven, that I still possessed "a counsellor like Sallust! If they think proper "to send me a successor, I shall submit without "reluctance; and had much rather improve the "short opportunity of doing good, than enjoy a "long and lasting impunity of evil[90]." The precarious and dependent situation of Julian displayed his virtues, and concealed his defects. The young hero who supported, in Gaul, the throne of Constantius, was not permitted to reform the vices of the government; but he had courage to alleviate or to pity the distress of the people. Unless he had been able to revive the martial

[90] Ammian. xvii. 3. Julian. Epistol. xv. edit. Spanheim. Such a conduct almost justifies the encomium of Mamertinus. Ita illi anni spatia divisa sunt, ut aut Barbaros domitet, aut civibus jura restituat; perpetuum professus, aut contra hostem, aut contra vitia, certamen.

ſpirit of the Romans, or to introduce the arts of induſtry and refinement among their ſavage enemies, he could not entertain any rational hopes of ſecuring the public tranquillity, either by the peace or conqueſt of Germany. Yet the victories of Julian ſuſpended, for a ſhort time, the inroads of the Barbarians, and delayed the ruin of the Weſtern Empire.

Deſcription of Paris.

His ſalutary influence reſtored the cities of Gaul, which had been ſo long expoſed to the evils of civil diſcord, Barbarian war, and domeſtic tyranny; and the ſpirit of induſtry was revived with the hopes of enjoyment. Agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, again flouriſhed under the protection of the laws; and the *curiæ*, or civil corporations, were again filled with uſeful and reſpectable members: the youth were no longer apprehenſive of marriage; and married perſons were no longer apprehenſive of poſterity: the public and private feſtivals were celebrated with cuſtomary pomp; and the frequent and ſecure intercourſe of the provinces diſplayed the image of national proſperity [91]. A mind like that of Julian, muſt have felt the general happineſs of which he was the author; but he viewed, with peculiar ſatisfaction and complacency, the city of Paris; the ſeat of his winter reſidence, and the object even of his partial affection [92]. That ſplendid

[91] Libanius, Orat. Parental. in Imp. Julian. c. 38. in Fabricius Bibliothec. Græc. tom. vii. p. 263, 264.

[92] See Julian. in Miſopogon. p. 340, 341. The primitive ſtate of Paris is illuſtrated by Henry Valeſius (ad Ammian. xx 4.), his brother Hadrian Valeſius, or de Valois, and M. d'Anville (in their reſpective

CHAP. XIX.

did capital, which now embraces an ample territory on either ſide of the Seine, was originally confined to the ſmall iſland in the midſt of the river, from whence the inhabitants derived a ſupply of pure and ſalubrious water. The river bathed the foot of the walls; and the town was acceſſible only by two wooden bridges. A foreſt overſpread the northern ſide of the Seine; but on the ſouth, the ground, which now bears the name of the univerſity, was inſenſibly covered with houſes, and adorned with a palace and amphitheatre, baths, an aqueduct, and a field of Mars for the exerciſe of the Roman troops. The ſeverity of the climate was tempered by the neighbourhood of the ocean; and with ſome precautions, which experience had taught, the vine and fig-tree were ſucceſsfully cultivated. But, in remarkable winters, the Seine was deeply frozen; and the huge pieces of ice that floated down the ſtream, might be compared, by an Aſiatic, to the blocks of white marble which were extracted from the quarries of Phrygia. The licentiouſneſs and corruption of Antioch, recalled to the memory of Julian the ſevere and ſimple manners of his beloved Lutetia [93]; where the amuſements of the theatre were unknown or deſpiſed. He indignantly contraſted the effeminate Syrians with the brave and honeſt ſimplicity of the Gauls, and al-

reſpective Notitias of ancient Gaul), the Abbé de Longuerue Deſcription de la France, tom. i. p. 12, 13. and M. Bonamy (in the Mem. de l'Academie des Inſcriptions, tom. xv. p. 656—691.).

[93] Τὴν φιλὴν Λευκετιαν. Julian. in Miſopogon. p. 340. Leucetia, or Lutetia, was the ancient name of the city which, according to the faſhion of the fourth century, aſſumed the territorial appellation of *Pariſii*.

moſt

moſt forgave the intemperance, which was the only ſtain of the Celtic character[94]. If Julian could now reviſit the capital of France, he might converſe with men of ſcience and genius, capable of underſtanding and of inſtructing a diſciple of the Greeks; he might excuſe the lively and graceful follies of a nation, whoſe martial ſpirit has never been enervated by the indulgence of luxury; and he muſt applaud the perfection of that ineſtimable art, which ſoftens and refines and embelliſhes the intercourſe of ſocial life.

[94] Julian. in Miſopogon. p. 359, 360.

CHAP XX.

The Motives, Progreſs, and Effects of the Converſion of Conſtantine.—Legal Eſtabliſhment and Conſtitution of the Chriſtian or Catholic Church.

CHAP. XX.

THE public eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity may be conſidered as one of thoſe important and domeſtic revolutions which excite the moſt lively curioſity, and afford the moſt valuable inſtruction. The victories and the civil policy of Conſtantine no longer influence the ſtate of Europe; but a conſiderable portion of the globe ſtill retains the impreſſion which it received from the converſion of that monarch; and the eccleſiaſtical inſtitutions of his reign are ſtill connected, by an indiſſoluble chain, with the opinions, the paſſions, and the intereſts of the preſent generation.

Date of the converſion of Conſtantine.

In the conſideration of a ſubject which may be examined with impartiality, but cannot be viewed with indifference, a difficulty immediately ariſes of a very unexpected nature; that of aſcertaining the real and preciſe date of the converſion of Conſtantine. The eloquent Lactantius, in the midſt of his court, ſeems impatient [1] to proclaim to the world

A. D. 306.

[1] The date of the Divine Inſtitutions of Lactantius has been accurately diſcuſſed, difficulties have been ſtarted, ſolutions propoſed, and an expedient imagined of two *original* editions; the former publiſhed during the perſecution of Diocletian, the latter under that of Licinius. See Dufreſnoy, Preſat. p. v. Tillemont, Mem Eccleſiaſt.

CHAP. XX.

world the glorious example of the ſovereign of Gaul; who, in the firſt moments of his reign, acknowledged and adored the majeſty of the true and only God [2]. The learned Euſebius has aſcribed the faith of Conſtantine to the miraculous ſign which was diſplayed in the heavens whilſt he meditated and prepared the Italian expedition [3]. A. D. 312. The hiſtorian Zoſimus maliciouſly aſſerts, that the emperor had embrued his hands in the blood of his eldeſt ſon, before he publicly renounced the gods of Rome and of his anceſtors [4]. A. D. 326. The perplexity produced by theſe diſcordant authorities, is derived from the behaviour of Conſtantine himſelf. According to the ſtrictneſs of eccleſiaſtical language, the firſt of the *Chriſtian* emperors was unworthy of that name, till the moment of his death; ſince it was only during his laſt illneſs A. D. 337. that he received, as a catechumen, the impoſition

ſiaſt. tom. vi. p. 465—470. Lardner's Credibility, part ii. vol. vii. p. 78—86. For my own part, I am *almoſt* convinced that Lactantius dedicated his Inſtitutions to the ſovereign of Gaul, at a time when Galerius, Maximin, and even Licinius, perſecuted the Chriſtians; that is, between the years 306 and 311.

[2] Lactant. Divin. Inſtitut. i. 1. vii. 27. The firſt and moſt important of theſe paſſages is indeed wanting in twenty-eight manuſcripts; but it is found in nineteen. If we weigh the comparative value of thoſe manuſcripts, one of 900 years old, in the king of France's library, may be alleged in it's favour; but the paſſage is omitted in the correct manuſcript of Bologna, which the P. de Mountfaucon aſcribes to the ſixth or ſeventh century (Diarium Italic. p. 409.). The taſte of moſt of the editors (except Iſæus, ſee Lactant. edit. Dufreſnoy, tom. i. p. 596.) has felt the genuine ſtyle of Lactantius.

[3] Euſeb. in Vit. Conſtant. l. i. c. 27—32.

[4] Zoſimus, l. ii. p. 104.

of

CHAP. XX.

of hands [5], and was afterwards admitted, by the initiatory rites of baptiſm, into the number of the faithful [6]. The Chriſtianity of Conſtantine muſt be allowed in a much more vague and qualified ſenſe; and the niceſt accuracy is required in tracing the ſlow and almoſt imperceptible gradations by which the monarch declared himſelf the protector, and at length the proſelyte, of the church. It was an arduous taſk to eradicate the habits and prejudices of his education, to acknowledge the divine power of Chriſt, and to underſtand that the truth of *his* revelation was incompatible with the worſhip of the gods. The obſtacles which he had probably experienced in his own mind, inſtructed him to proceed with caution in the momentous change of a national religion; and he inſenſibly diſcovered his new opinions, as far as he could enforce them with

5 That right was *always* uſed in making a catechumen (ſee Bingham's Antiquities, l. x. c. 1. p. 419. Dom. Chardon, Hiſt. des Sacremens, tom. i. p. 62.) and Conſtantine received it for the *firſt* time (Euſeb. in Vit. Conſtant. l. iv. c. 61.) immediately before his baptiſm and death. From the connection of theſe two facts, Valeſius (ad loc. Euſeb.) has drawn the concluſion which is reluctantly admitted by Tillemont (Hiſt. des Empereurs, tom. iv. p. 628.), and oppoſed with feeble arguments by Moſheim (p. 968.).

6 Euſeb. in Vit. Conſtant. l. iv. c. 61, 62, 63. The legend of Conſtantine's baptiſm at Rome, thirteen years before his death, was invented in the eighth century, as a proper motive for his *donation*. Such has been the gradual progreſs of knowledge, that a ſtory, of which Cardinal Baronius (Annal. Eccleſiaſt. A. D. 324, No. 43—49.) declared himſelf the unblushing advocate, is now feebly ſupported, even within the verge of the Vatican. See the Antiquitates Chriſtianæ, tom. ii. p. 232.; a work publiſhed with ſix approbations at Rome, in the year 1751, by Father Mamachi, a learned Dominican.

ſafety

CHAP. XX.

safety and with effect. During the whole course of his reign, the stream of Christianity flowed with a gentle, though accelerated, motion: but its general direction was sometimes checked, and sometimes diverted, by the accidental circumstances of the times, and by the prudence, or possibly by the caprice, of the monarch. His ministers were permitted to signify the intentions of their master in the various language which was best adapted to their respective principles[7]; and he artfully balanced the hopes and fears of his subjects, by publishing in the same year two edicts; A. D. 321. the first of which enjoined the solemn observance of Sunday[8], and the second directed the regular consultation of Aruspices[9]. While this important revolution yet remained in suspense, the Christians and the Pagans watched the conduct of their sovereign with the same anxiety, but with very opposite sentiments. The former were prompted by every motive of zeal, as well as vanity, to exaggerate the marks of his favour, and the evidences of his faith. The latter, till their just apprehensions were changed into despair and

[7] The quæstor, or secretary, who composed the law of the Theodosian Code, makes his master say with indifference, "homi-"nibus supradictæ religionis" (l. xvi. tit. ii. leg. 1.). The minister of ecclesiastical affairs was allowed a more devout and respectful style, της ενθεσμου και αγιωτατης καθολικης θρησκειας; the legal, most holy, and Catholic worship. See Eusebius Hist. Eccles. l. x. c. 6.

[8] Cod. Theodos. l. ii. tit. viii. leg. 1. Cod. Justinian. l. iii. tit. xii. leg. 3. Constantine styles the Lord's day *dies solis*, a name which could not offend the ears of his Pagan subjects.

[9] Cod. Theod. l. xvi. tit. x. l. 1. Godefroy, in the character of a commentator, endeavours (tom. vi. p. 257.) to excuse Constantine; but the more zealous Baronius (Annal. Eccles. A. D. 321, No. 28.) censures his profane conduct with truth and asperity.

CHAP. XX.

resentment, attempted to conceal from the world, and from themselves, that the gods of Rome could no longer reckon the emperor in the number of their votaries. The same passions and prejudices have engaged the partial writers of the times to connect the public profession of Christianity with the most glorious or the most ignominious æra of the reign of Constantine.

His Pagan superstition.

Whatever symptoms of Christian piety might transpire in the discourses or actions of Constantine, he persevered till he was near forty years of age in the practice of the established religion [10]; and the same conduct, which in the court of Nicomedia might be imputed to his fear, could be ascribed only to the inclination or policy of the sovereign of Gaul. His liberality restored and enriched the temples of the gods: the medals which issued from his Imperial mint are impressed with the figures and attributes of Jupiter and Apollo, of Mars and Hercules; and his filial piety increased the council of Olympus by the solemn apotheosis of his father Constantius [11]. But the devotion of Constantine was more peculiarly directed to the genius of the Sun, the Apollo of Greek and Roman mythology; and he was pleased to be represented with the symbols of the

[10] Theodoret (l. i. c. 18.) seems to insinuate that Helena gave her son a Christian education; but we may be assured, from the superior authority of Eusebius (in Vit. Constant. l. iii. c. 47.), that she herself was indebted to Constantine for the knowledge of Christianity.

[11] See the medals of Constantine in Ducange and Banduri. As few cities had retained the privilege of coining, almost all the medals of that age issued from the mint under the sanction of the Imperial authority.

God

CHAP. XX.

God of Light and Poetry. The unerring ſhafts of that deity, the brightneſs of his eyes, his laurel wreath, immortal beauty, and elegant accompliſhments, ſeem to point him out as the patron of a young hero. The altars of Apollo were crowned with the votive offerings of Conſtantine; and the credulous multitude were taught to believe, that the emperor was permitted to behold with mortal eyes the viſible majeſty of their tutelar deity; and that either waking or in a viſion, he was bleſſed with the auſpicious omens of a long and victorious reign. The Sun was univerſally celebrated as the invincible guide and protector of Conſtantine; and the Pagans might reaſonably expect that the inſulted god would purſue with unrelenting vengeance the impiety of his ungrateful favourite [12].

He protects the Chriſtians of Gaul, A.D. 306, —312.

As long as Conſtantine exerciſed a limited ſovereignty over the provinces of Gaul, his Chriſtian ſubjects were protected by the authority, and perhaps by the laws, of a prince, who wiſely left to the gods the care of vindicating their own honour. If we may credit the aſſertion of Conſtantine himſelf, he had been an indignant ſpectator of the ſavage cruelties which were inflicted, by the hands of Roman ſoldiers, on thoſe citizens whoſe religion was their only crime [13]. In the Eaſt and in

[12] The panegyric of Eumenius (vii. inter Panegyr. Vet), which was pronounced a few months before the Italian war, abounds with the moſt unexceptionable evidence of the Pagan ſuperſtition of Conſtantine, and of his particular veneration for Apollo, or the Sun; to which Julian alludes (Orat. vii. p. 228. απολλωνι σε.). See Commentaire de Spanheim ſur les Céſars, p. 317.

[13] Conſtantin. Orat. ad Sanctos, c. 25. But it might eaſily be ſhewn, that the Greek tranſlator has improved the ſenſe of the Latin original;

CHAP. XX.

in the Weſt, he had ſeen the different effects of ſeverity and indulgence; and as the former was rendered ſtill more odious by the example of Galerius, his implacable enemy, the latter was recommended to his imitation by the authority and advice of a dying father. The ſon of Conſtantius immediately ſuſpended or repealed the edicts of perſecution, and granted the free exerciſe of their religious ceremonies to all thoſe who had already profeſſed themſelves members of the church. They were ſoon encouraged to depend on the favour as well as on the juſtice of their ſovereign, who had imbibed a ſecret and ſincere reverence for the name of Chriſt, and for the God of the Chriſtians [14].

A. D. 313, March. Edict of Milan.

About five months after the conqueſt of Italy, the emperor made a ſolemn and authentic declaration of his ſentiments, by the celebrated edict of Milan, which reſtored peace to the Catholic church. In the perſonal interview of the two weſtern princes, Conſtantine, by the aſcendant of genius and power, obtained the ready concurrence of his colleague Licinius; the union of their names and authority diſarmed the fury of Maximin; and, after the death of the tyrant of the Eaſt, the edict of Milan was received as a general and fundamental law of the Roman world [15].

The

original; and the aged emperor might recollect the perſecution of Diocletian with a more lively abhorrence than he had actually felt in the days of his youth and Paganiſm.

[14] See Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. viii. 13. l. ix. 9. and in Vit. Conſt. l. i. c. 16, 17. Lactant. Divin. Inſtitut. i. 1. Cæcilius de Mort. Perſecut. c. 25.

[15] Cæcilius (de Mort. Perſecut. c. 48.) has preſerved the Latin original; and Euſebius (Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. x. c. 5.) has given a Greek tranſlation

CHAP. XX.

The wiſdom of the emperors provided for the reſtitution of all the civil and religious rights, of which the Chriſtians had been ſo unjuſtly deprived. It was enacted, that the places of worſhip, and public lands, which had been confiſcated, ſhould be reſtored to the church, without diſpute, without delay, and without expence: and this ſevere injunction was accompanied with a gracious promiſe, that if any of the purchaſers had paid a fair and adequate price, they ſhould be indemnified from the Imperial treaſury. The ſalutary regulations which guard the future tranquillity of the faithful, are framed on the principles of enlarged and equal toleration; and ſuch an equality muſt have been interpreted by a recent ſect as an advantageous and honourable diſtinction. The two emperors proclaim to the world, that they have granted a free and abſolute power to the Chriſtians, and to all others, of following the religion which each individual thinks proper to prefer, to which he has addicted his mind, and which he may deem the beſt adapted to his own uſe. They carefully explain every ambiguous word, remove every exception, and exact from the governors of the provinces a ſtrict obedience to the true and ſimple meaning of an edict, which was deſigned to eſtabliſh and ſecure, without any limitation, the claims of religious liberty. They condeſcend to aſſign two weighty reaſons which have induced them to allow this univerſal toleration: the humane intention of conſulting the peace and happineſs

tranſlation of this perpetual edict, which refers to ſome proviſional regulations.

CHAP. XX.

pineſs of their people; and the pious hope, that, by ſuch a conduct, they ſhall appeaſe and propitiate *the Deity*, whoſe ſeat is in heaven. They gratefully acknowledge the many ſignal proofs which they have received of the divine favour; and they truſt that the ſame Providence will for ever continue to protect the proſperity of the prince and people. From theſe vague and indefinite expreſſions of piety, three ſuppoſitions may be deduced, of a different, but not of an incompatible, nature. The mind of Conſtantine might fluctuate between the Pagan and the Chriſtian religions. According to the looſe and complying notions of Polytheiſm, he might acknowledge the God of the Chriſtians as *one* of the *many* deities who compoſed the hierarchy of heaven. Or perhaps he might embrace the philoſophic and pleaſing idea, that, notwithſtanding the variety of names, of rites, and of opinions, all the ſects and all the nations of mankind are united in the worſhip of the common Father and Creator of the univerſe[16].

Uſe and beauty of the Chriſtian morality.

But the counſels of princes are more frequently influenced by views of temporal advantage, than by conſiderations of abſtract and ſpeculative truth. The partial and increaſing favour of Conſtantine

[16] A panegyric of Conſtantine, pronounced ſeven or eight months after the edict of Milan (ſee Gothofred. Chronolog. Legum, p. 7. and Tillemont, Hiſt. des Empereurs, tom. iv. p. 246.), uſes the following remarkable expreſſion: "Summe rerum ſator, cujus tot "nomina ſunt, quot linguas gentium eſſe voluiſti, quem enim te "ipſe dici velis, ſcire non poſſumus." Panegyr. Vet. ix. 26. In explaining Conſtantine's progreſs in the faith, Moſheim (p. 971, &c.) is ingenious, ſubtle, prolix.

ma-

CHAP. XX.

may naturally be referred to the eſteem which he entertained for the moral character of the Chriſtians; and to a perſuaſion, that the propagation of the goſpel would inculcate the practice of private and public virtue. Whatever latitude an abſolute monarch may aſſume in his own conduct, whatever indulgence he may claim for his own paſſions, it is undoubtedly his intereſt that all his ſubjects ſhould reſpect the natural and civil obligations of ſociety. But the operation of the wiſeſt laws is imperfect and precarious. They ſeldom inſpire virtue, they cannot always reſtrain vice. Their power is inſufficient to prohibit all that they condemn, nor can they always puniſh the actions which they prohibit. The legiſlators of antiquity had ſummoned to their aid the powers of education and of opinion. But every principle which had once maintained the vigour and purity of Rome and Sparta, was long ſince extinguiſhed in a declining and deſpotic empire. Philoſophy ſtill exerciſed her temperate ſway over the human mind, but the cauſe of virtue derived very feeble ſupport from the influence of the Pagan ſuperſtition. Under theſe diſcouraging circumſtances, a prudent magiſtrate might obſerve with pleaſure the progreſs of a religion, which diffuſed among the people a pure, benevolent, and univerſal ſyſtem of ethics, adapted to every duty and every condition of life; recommended as the will and reaſon of the Supreme Deity, and enforced by the ſanction of eternal rewards or puniſhments. The experience of Greek and Roman hiſtory could not inform the world how far the ſyſtem of national

CHAP. XX.

manners might be reformed and improved by the precepts of a divine revelation; and Conſtantine might liſten with ſome confidence to the flattering, and indeed reaſonable, aſſurances of Lactantius. The eloquent apologiſt ſeemed firmly to expect, and almoſt ventured to promiſe, *that* the eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity would reſtore the innocence and felicity of the primitive age; *that* the worſhip of the true God would extinguiſh war and diſſenſion among thoſe who mutually conſidered themſelves as the children of a common parent; *that* every impure deſire, every angry or ſelfiſh paſſion, would be reſtrained by the knowledge of the goſpel; and *that* the magiſtrates might ſheath the ſword of juſtice among a people who would be univerſally actuated by the ſentiments of truth and piety, of equity and moderation, of harmony and univerſal love [17].

Theory and practice of paſſive obedience.

The paſſive and unreſiſting obedience, which bows under the yoke of authority, or even of oppreſſion, muſt have appeared, in the eyes of an abſolute monarch, the moſt conſpicuous and uſeful of the evangelic virtues [18]. The primitive Chriſtians derived the inſtitution of civil government, not from the conſent of the people, but from the decrees of heaven. The reigning emperor, though he had uſurped the ſceptre by trea-

[17] See the elegant deſcription of Lactantius (Divin. Inſtitut. v. 8.) who is much more perſpicuous and poſitive than it becomes a diſcreet prophet.

[18] The political ſyſtem of the Chriſtians is explained by Grotius, de Jure Belli et Pacis, l. i. c. 3, 4. Grotius was a republican and an exile, but the mildneſs of his temper inclined him to ſupport the eſtabliſhed powers.

ſon

CHAP. XX.

ſon and murder, immediately aſſumed the ſacred character of vicegerent of the Deity. To the Deity alone he was accountable for the abuſe of his power; and his ſubjects were indiſſolubly bound, by their oath of fidelity, to a tyrant, who had violated every law of nature and ſociety. The humble Chriſtians were ſent into the world as ſheep among wolves; and ſince they were not permitted to employ force, even in the defence of their religion, they ſhould be ſtill more criminal if they were tempted to ſhed the blood of their fellow-creatures, in diſputing the vain privileges, or the ſordid poſſeſſions, of this tranſitory life. Faithful to the doctrine of the apoſtle, who in the reign of Nero had preached the duty of unconditional ſubmiſſion, the Chriſtians of the three firſt centuries preſerved their conſcience pure and innocent of the guilt of ſecret conſpiracy, or open rebellion. While they experienced the rigour of perſecution, they were never provoked either to meet their tyrants in the field, or indignantly to withdraw themſelves into ſome remote and ſequeſtered corner of the globe [19]. The proteſtants of France, of Germany, and of Britain, who aſſerted with ſuch intrepid courage their civil and religious freedom, have been inſulted by the invidious compariſon between the conduct of the

[19] Tertullian. Apolog. c. 32, 34, 35, 36. Tamen nunquam Albiniani, nec Nigriani vel Caſſiani inveniri potuerunt Chriſtiani. Ad Scapulam, c. 2. If this aſſertion be ſtrictly true, it excludes the Chriſtians of that age from all civil and military employments, which would have compelled them to take an active part in the ſervice of their reſpective governors. See Moyle's Works, vol. ii. p. 349.

primitive

CHAP. XX.

primitive and of the reformed Chriſtians[20]. Perhaps, inſtead of cenſure, ſome applauſe may be due to the ſuperior ſenſe and ſpirit of our anceſtors, who had convinced themſelves that religion cannot aboliſh the unalienable rights of human nature[21]. Perhaps the patience of the primitive church may be aſcribed to its weakneſs, as well as to its virtue. A ſect of unwarlike plebeians, without leaders, without arms, without fortifications, muſt have encountered inevitable deſtruction in a raſh and fruitleſs reſiſtance to the maſter of the Roman legions. But the Chriſtians, when they deprecated the wrath of Diocletian, or ſolicited the favour of Conſtantine, could allege, with truth and confidence, that they held the principle of paſſive obedience, and that, in the ſpace of three centuries, their conduct had always been conformable to their principles. They might add, that the throne of the emperors would be eſtabliſhed on a fixed and permanent baſis, if all their ſubjects, embracing the Chriſtian doctrine, ſhould learn to ſuffer and to obey.

Divine right of Conſtantine.

In the general order of Providence, princes and tyrants are conſidered as the miniſters of Heaven, appointed to rule or to chaſtiſe the nations of the earth. But ſacred hiſtory affords many illuſtrious

[20] See the artful Boſſuet (Hiſt. des Variations des Egliſes Proteſtantes, tom. iii. p. 210—258), and the malicious Bayle (tom. ii. p. 620.). I *name* Bayle, for he was certainly the author of the Avis aux Refugiés; conſult the Dictionnaire Critique de Chauffepié, tom. i. part ii. p. 145.

[21] Buchanan is the earlieſt, or at leaſt the moſt celebrated, of the reformers, who has juſtified the theory of reſiſtance. See his Dialogue de Jure Regni apud Scotos, tom. ii. p. 28. 30. edit. fol. Ruddi man.

examples

examples of the more immediate interpoſition of the Deity in the government of his choſen people. The ſceptre and the ſword were committed to the hands of Moſes, of Joſhua, of Gideon, of David, of the Maccabees; the virtues of thoſe heroes were the motive or the effect of the Divine favour, the ſucceſs of their arms was deſtined to atchieve the deliverance or the triumph of the church. If the judges of Iſrael were occaſional and temporary magiſtrates, the kings of Judah derived from the royal unction of their great anceſtor, an hereditary and indefeaſible right, which could not be forfeited by their own vices, nor recalled by the caprice of their ſubjects. The ſame extraordinary providence, which was no longer confined to the Jewiſh people, might elect Conſtantine and his family as the protectors of the Chriſtian world; and the devout Lactantius announces, in a prophetic tone, the future glories of his long and univerſal reign[22]. Galerius and Maximin, Maxentius and Licinius, were the rivals who ſhared with the favourite of Heaven the provinces of the empire. The tragic deaths of Galerius and Maximin ſoon gratified the reſentment, and fulfilled the ſanguine expectations, of the Chriſtians. The ſucceſs of Conſtantine againſt Maxentius and Licinius, removed the two formidable competitors who ſtill oppoſed the triumph of the ſecond David, and his cauſe might ſeem to claim the peculiar interpoſition of Providence. The cha-

[22] Lactant. Divin. Inſtitut. i. 1. Euſebius, in the courſe of his hiſtory, his life, and his oration, repeatedly inculcates the divine right of Conſtantine to the empire.

racter

CHAP. XX.

racter of the Roman tyrant disgraced the purple and human nature; and though the Christians might enjoy his precarious favour, they were exposed, with the rest of his subjects, to the effects of his wanton and capricious cruelty. The conduct of Licinius soon betrayed the reluctance with which he had consented to the wise and humane regulations of the edict of Milan. The convocation of provincial synods was prohibited in his dominions; his Christian officers were ignominiously dismissed; and if he avoided the guilt, or rather danger, of a general persecution, his partial oppressions were rendered still more odious, by the violation of a solemn and voluntary engagement[23]. While the East, according to the lively expression of Eusebius, was involved in the shades of infernal darkness, the auspicious rays of celestial light warmed and illuminated the provinces of the West. The piety of Constantine was admitted as an unexceptionable proof of the justice of his arms; and his use of victory confirmed the opinion of the Christians, that their hero was inspired, and conducted, by the Lord of Hosts. The conquest of Italy produced a general edict of toleration: and as soon as the defeat of Licinius had invested Constantine with the sole
A. D. 324. dominion of the Roman world, he immediately, by circular letters, exhorted all his subjects to imitate, without delay, the example of their sove-

[23] Our imperfect knowledge of the persecution of Licinius is derived from Eusebius (Hist. Eccles. l. x. c 8. Vit. Constantin. l. i. c. 49—56. l. ii. c. 1, 2). Aurelius Victor mentions his cruelty in general terms.

reign,

CHAP. XX.

reign, and to embrace the divine truth of Chriſtianity [24].

Loyalty and zeal of the Chriſtian party.

The aſſurance that the elevation of Conſtantine was intimately connected with the deſigns of Providence, inſtilled into the minds of the Chriſtians two opinions, which, by very different means, aſſiſted the accompliſhment of the prophecy. Their warm and active loyalty exhauſted in his favour every reſource of human induſtry; and they confidently expected that their ſtrenuous efforts would be ſeconded by ſome divine and miraculous aid. The enemies of Conſtantine have imputed to intereſted motives the alliance which he inſenſibly contracted with the Catholic church, and which apparently contributes to the ſucceſs of his ambition. In the beginning of the fourth century, the Chriſtians ſtill bore a very inadequate proportion to the inhabitants of the empire; but among a degenerate people, who viewed the change of maſters with the indifference of ſlaves, the ſpirit and union of a religious party might aſſiſt the popular leader, to whoſe ſervice, from a principle of conſcience, they had devoted their lives and fortunes [25]. The example of his father had inſtructed Conſtantine to eſteem and to reward the merit of the Chriſtians; and in the diſ-

[24] Euſeb. in Vit. Conſtant. l. ii. c. 24—42. 48—60.

[25] In the beginning of the laſt century, the Papiſts of England were only a *thirtieth*, and the Proteſtants of France only a *fifteenth*, part of the reſpective nations, to whom their ſpirit and power were a conſtant object of apprehenſion. See the relations which Bentivoglio (who was then nuncio at Bruſſels, and afterwards cardinal) tranſmitted to the court of Rome (Relazione, tom. ii. p. 211. 241.). Bentivoglio was curious, well-informed, but ſomewhat partial.

tribution

CHAP. XX.

tribution of public offices, he had the advantage of ſtrengthening his government, by the choice of miniſters or generals, in whoſe fidelity he could repoſe a juſt and unreſerved confidence. By the influence of theſe dignified miſſionaries, the proſelytes of the new faith muſt have multiplied in the court and army; the Barbarians of Germany, who filled the ranks of the legions, were of a careleſs temper, which acquieſced without reſiſtance in the religion of their commander; and when they paſſed the Alps, it may fairly be preſumed, that a great number of the ſoldiers had already conſecrated their ſwords to the ſervice of Chriſt and of Conſtantine [26]. The habits of mankind, and the intereſt of religion, gradually abated the horror of war and bloodſhed, which had ſo long prevailed among the Chriſtians; and in the councils which were aſſembled under the gracious protection of Conſtantine, the authority of the biſhops was ſeaſonably employed to ratify the obligation of the military oath, and to inflict the penalty of excommunication on thoſe ſoldiers who threw away their arms during the peace of the church [27]. While Conſtantine, in his own dominions, increaſed the number and zeal of his faithful adherents, he could depend on the ſupport of a

[26] This careleſs temper of the Germans appears almoſt uniformly in the hiſtory of the converſion of each of the tribes. The legions of Conſtantine were recruited with Germans (Zoſimus, l. ii. p. 86.); and the court even of his father had been filled with Chriſtians. See the firſt book of the life of Conſtantine, by Euſebius.

[27] De his qui arma projiciunt in *pace*, placuit eos abſtinere a communione. Concil. Arelat. Canon iii. The beſt critics apply theſe words to the *peace of the church*.

CHAP. XX.

powerful faction in thoſe provinces, which were ſtill poſſeſſed or uſurped by his rivals. A ſecret diſaffection was diffuſed among the Chriſtian ſubjects of Maxentius and Licinius; and the reſentment which the latter did not attempt to conceal, ſerved only to engage them ſtill more deeply in the intereſt of his competitor. The regular correſpondence which connected the biſhops of the moſt diſtant provinces, enabled them freely to communicate their wiſhes and their deſigns, and to tranſmit without danger any uſeful intelligence, or any pious contributions, which might promote the ſervice of Conſtantine, who publicly declared that he had taken up arms for the deliverance of the church [28].

Expectation and belief of a miracle.

The enthuſiaſm which inſpired the troops, and perhaps the emperor himſelf, had ſharpened their ſwords while it ſatisfied their conſcience. They marched to battle with the full aſſurance, that the ſame God, who had formerly opened a paſſage to the Iſraelites through the waters of Jordan, and had thrown down the walls of Jericho at the ſound of the trumpets of Joſhua, would diſplay his viſible majeſty and power in the victory of Conſtantine. The evidence of eccleſiaſtical hiſtory is pre-

[28] Euſebius always conſiders the ſecond civil war againſt Licinius as a ſort of religious cruſade. At the invitation of the tyrant, ſome Chriſtian officers had reſumed their *zones*; or, in other words, had returned to the military ſervice. Their conduct was afterwards cenſured by the 12th canon of the Council of Nice; if this particular application may be received, inſtead of the looſe and general ſenſe of the Greek interpreters, Balſamon, Zonaras, and Alexis Ariſtenus. See Beveridge, Pandect. Eccleſ. Græc. tom. i. p. 72. tom. ii. p. 78. Annotation.

pared

CHAP. XX.

pared to affirm, that their expectations were juſtified by the conſpicuous miracle to which the converſion of the firſt Chriſtian emperor has been almoſt unanimouſly aſcribed. The real or imaginary cauſe of ſo important an event, deſerves and demands the attention of poſterity; and I ſhall endeavour to form a juſt eſtimate of the famous viſion of Conſtantine, by a diſtinct conſideration of the *ſtandard*, the *dream*, and the *celeſtial ſign*; by ſeparating the hiſtorical, the natural, and the marvellous parts of this extraordinary ſtory, which, in the compoſition of a ſpecious argument, have been artfully confounded in one ſplendid and brittle maſs.

The *Labarum*, or ſtandard of the croſs.

I. An inſtrument of the tortures which were inflicted only on ſlaves and ſtrangers, became an object of horror in the eyes of a Roman citizen; and the ideas of guilt, of pain, and of ignominy, were cloſely united with the idea of the croſs [29]. The piety, rather than the humanity, of Conſtantine, ſoon aboliſhed in his dominions the puniſhment which the Saviour of mankind had condeſcended to ſuffer [30]; but the emperor had already

[29] Nomen ipſum *crucis* abſit non modo a corpore civium Romanorum, ſed etiam a cogitatione, oculis, auribus. Cicero pro Raberio, c. 5. The Chriſtian writers, Juſtin, Minucius Fœlix, Tertullian, Jerom, and Maximus of Turin, have inveſtigated with tolerable ſucceſs the figure or likeneſs of a croſs in almoſt every object of nature or art; in the interſection of the meridian and equator, the human face, a bird flying, a man ſwimming, a maſt and yard, a plough, a *ſtandard*, &c. &c. &c. See Lipſius de Cruce, l. i. c. 9.

[30] See Aurelius Victor, who conſiders this law as one of the examples of Conſtantine's piety. An edict ſo honourable to Chriſtianity deſerved a place in the Theodoſian Code, inſtead of the indirect mention of it, which ſeems to reſult from the compariſon of the vth and xviiith titles of the ixth book.

learned to deſpiſe the prejudices of his education, and of his people, before he could erect in the midſt of Rome his own ſtatue, bearing a croſs in its right hand; with an inſcription, which referred the victory of his arms, and the deliverance of Rome, to the virtue of that ſalutary ſign, the true ſymbol of force and courage[31]. The ſame ſymbol ſanctified the arms of the ſoldiers of Conſtantine; the croſs glittered on their helmets, was engraved on their ſhields, was interwoven into their banners; and the conſecrated emblems which adorned the perſon of the emperor himſelf, were diſtinguiſhed only by richer materials and more exquiſite workmanſhip[32]. But the principal ſtandard which diſplayed the triumph of the croſs was ſtiled the *Labarum*[33], an obſcure, though

CHAP. XX.

[31] Euſebius, in Vit. Conſtantin. l. i. c. 40. The ſtatue, or at leaſt the croſs and inſcription, may be aſcribed with more probability to the ſecond, or even the third, viſit of Conſtantine to Rome. Immediately after the defeat of Maxentius, the minds of the ſenate and people were ſcarcely ripe for this public monument.

[32] Agnoſcas regina libens mea ſigna neceſſe eſt;
In quibus effigies *cruris* aut gemmata refulget
Aut longis ſolido ex auro præfertur in haſtis.
Hoc ſigno invictus, tranſmiſſis Alpibus Ultor
Servitium ſolvit miſerabile Conſtantinus
* * * * * * * *
Chriſtus *purpureum* gemmanti textus in auro
Signabat *Labarum*, clypeorum inſignia Chriſtus
Scripſerat; ardebat ſummis *crux* addita criſtis.
Prudent. in Symmachum, l. ii. 464. 486.

[33] The derivation and meaning of the word *Labarum*, or *Laborum*, which is employed by Gregory Nazianzen, Ambroſe, Prudentius, &c. ſtill remain totally unknown; in ſpite of the efforts of the critics, who have ineffectually tortured the Latin, Greek, Spaniſh, Celtic, Teutonic, Illyric, Armenian, &c. in ſearch of an etymology. See Ducange, in Gloſſ. Med. & infim. Latinitat. ſub voce *Labarum*, and Godefroy, ad Cod. Theodoſ. tom. ii. p. 143.

CHAP. XX.

celebrated name, which has been vainly derived from almoſt all the languages of the world. It is deſcribed [34] as a long pike interſected by a tranſverſal beam. The ſilken veil which hung down from the beam, was curiouſly enwrought with the images of the reigning monarch and his children. The ſummit of the pike ſupported a crown of gold which encloſed the myſterious monogram, at once expreſſive of the figure of the croſs, and the initial letters of the name of Chriſt [35]. The ſafety of the labarum was entruſted to fifty guards, of approved valour and fidelity; their ſtation was marked by honours and emoluments; and ſome fortunate accidents ſoon introduced an opinion, that as long as the guards of the labarum were engaged in the execution of their office, they were ſecure and invulnerable amidſt the darts of the enemy. In the ſecond civil war Licinius felt and dreaded the power of this conſecrated banner, the ſight of which, in the diſtreſs of battle, animated the ſoldiers of Conſtantine with an invincible enthuſiaſm, and ſcattered terror and diſmay through the ranks of the adverſe legions [36]. The Chriſtian emperors,

[34] Euſeb. in Vit. Conſtantin. l. i. c. 30, 31. Baronius (Annal. Eccleſ. A. D. 312, N° 26.) has engraved a repreſentation of the Labarum.

[35] Tranſversâ X literâ, ſummo capite circumflexo, Chriſtum in ſcutis notat. Cæcilius de M. P. c. 44. Cuper (ad M. P. in edit. Lactant. tom. ii. p. 500.) and Baronius (A. D. 312. N° 25.) have engraved from ancient monuments ſeveral ſpecimens (as thus or) of theſe monograms, which became extremely faſhionable in the Chriſtian world.

[36] Euſeb. in Vit. Conſtantin. l. ii. c. 7, 8, 9. He introduces the Labarum before the Italian expedition; but his narrative ſeems to indicate

emperors, who reſpected the example of Conſtantine, diſplayed in all their military expeditions the ſtandard of the croſs; but when the degenerate ſucceſſors of Theodoſius had ceaſed to appear in perſon at the head of their armies, the labarum was depoſited as a venerable but uſeleſs relic in the palace of Conſtantinople [37]. Its honours are ſtill preſerved on the medals of the Flavian family. Their grateful devotion has placed the monogram of Chriſt in the midſt of the enſigns of Rome. The ſolemn epithets of, ſafety of the republic, glory of the army, reſtoration of public happineſs, are equally applied to the religious and military trophies; and there is ſtill extant a medal of the emperor Conſtantius, where the ſtandard of the labarum is accompanied with theſe memorable words, BY THIS SIGN THOU SHALT CONQUER [38].

The dream of Conſtantine.

II. In all occaſions of danger or diſtreſs, it was the practice of the primitive Chriſtians to fortify their minds and bodies by the ſign of the croſs, which they uſed, in all their eccleſiaſtical rites, in

dicate that it was never ſhewn at the head of an army, till Conſtantine, above ten years afterwards, declared himſelf the enemy of Licinius, and the deliverer of the church.

[37] See Cod. Theod. l. vi. tit. xxv. Sozomen, l. i. c. 2. Theophan. Chronograph. p. 11. Theophanes lived towards the end of the eighth century, almoſt five hundred years after Conſtantine. The modern Greeks were not inclined to diſplay in the field the ſtandard of the empire and of Chriſtianity; and though they depended on every ſuperſtitious hope of *defence*, the promiſe of *victory* would have appeared too bold a fiction.

[38] The Abbé du Voiſin, p. 103, &c. alleges ſeveral of theſe medals, and quotes a particular diſſertation of a Jeſuit, the Pere de Grainville, on this ſubject.

CHAP. XX.

all the daily occurrences of life, as an infallible preſervative againſt every ſpecies of ſpiritual or temporal evil [39]. The authority of the church might alone have had ſufficient weight to juſtify the devotion of Conſtantine, who, in the ſame prudent and gradual progreſs, acknowledged the truth, and aſſumed the ſymbol, of Chriſtianity. But the teſtimony of a contemporary writer, who in a formal treatiſe has avenged the cauſe of religion, beſtows on the piety of the emperor a more awful and ſublime character. He affirms, with the moſt perfect confidence, that in the night which preceded the laſt battle againſt Maxentius, Conſtantine was admoniſhed in a dream to inſcribe the ſhields of his ſoldiers with the *celeſtial ſign of God*, the ſacred monogram of the name of Chriſt; that he executed the commands of heaven, and that his valour and obedience were rewarded by the deciſive victory of the Milvian Bridge. Some conſiderations might perhaps incline a ſceptical mind to ſuſpect the judgment or the veracity of the rhetorician, whoſe pen, either from zeal or intereſt, was devoted to the cauſe of the prevailing faction [40]. He appears to have publiſhed his deaths

39 Tertullian, de Corona, c. 3. Athanaſius, tom. i. p. 101. The learned Jeſuit Petavius (Dogmata Theolog. l. xv. c. 9, 10.) has collected many ſimilar paſſages on the virtues of the croſs, which in the laſt age embarraſſed our Proteſtant diſputants.

40 Cæcilius, de M. P. c. 44. It is certain, that this hiſtorical declamation was compoſed and publiſhed, while Licinius, ſovereign of the Eaſt, ſtill preſerved the friendſhip of Conſtantine, and of the Chriſtians. Every reader of taſte muſt perceive, that the ſtyle is of a very different and inferior character to that of Lactantius; and ſuch indeed is the judgment of Le Clerc and Lardner (Bibliotheque Ancienne

deaths of the perſecutors at Nicomedia about three years after the Roman victory; but the interval of a thouſand miles, and a thouſand days, will allow an ample latitude for the invention of declaimers, the credulity of party, and the tacit approbation of the emperor himſelf; who might liſten without indignation to a marvellous tale, which exalted his fame, and promoted his deſigns. In favour of Licinius, who ſtill diſſembled his animoſity to the Chriſtians, the ſame author has provided a ſimilar viſion, of a form of prayer, which was communicated by an angel, and repeated by the whole army before they engaged the legions of the tyrant Maximin. The frequent repetition of miracles ſerves to provoke, where it does not ſubdue, the reaſon of mankind[41]; but if the dream of Conſtantine is ſeparately conſidered, it may be naturally explained either by the policy or the enthuſiaſm of the emperor. Whilſt his anxiety for the approaching day, which muſt decide the fate of the empire, was ſuſpended by a ſhort and interrupted ſlumber, the venerable

CHAP. XX.

Ancienne et Moderne, tom. iii. p. 438. Credibility of the Goſpel, &c. part ii. vol. vii. p. 94.). Three arguments from the title of the book, and from the names of Donatus and Cæcilius, are produced by the advocates for Lactantius (See the P. Leſtocq, tom. ii. p. 46—60.). Each of theſe proofs is ſingly weak and defective; but their concurrence has great weight. I have often fluctuated, and ſhall *tamely* follow the Colbert MS. in calling the author (whoever he was) Cæcilius.

[41] Cæcilius, de M. P. c. 46. There ſeems to be ſome reaſon in the obſervation of M. de Voltaire (Oeuvres, tom xiv. p. 307.), who aſcribes to the ſucceſs of Conſtantine the ſuperior fame of his Labarum above the angel of Licinius. Yet even this angel is favourably entertained by Pagi, Tillemont, Fleury, &c. who are fond of increaſing their ſtock of miracles.

CHAP. XX.

form of Chriſt, and the well-known ſymbol of his religion, might forcibly offer themſelves to the active fancy of a prince who reverenced the name, and had perhaps ſecretly implored the power, of the God of the Chriſtians. As readily might a conſummate ſtateſman indulge himſelf in the uſe of one of thoſe military ſtratagems, one of thoſe pious frauds, which Philip and Sertorius had employed with ſuch art and effect[42]. The præternatural origin of dreams was univerſally admitted by the nations of antiquity, and a conſiderable part of the Gallic army was already prepared to place their confidence in the ſalutary ſign of the Chriſtian religion. The ſecret viſion of Conſtantine could be diſproved only by the event; and the intrepid hero who had paſſed the Alps and the Appenine, might view with careleſs deſpair the conſequences of a defeat under the walls of Rome. The ſenate and people, exulting in their own deliverance from an odious tyrant, acknowledged that the victory of Conſtantine ſurpaſſed the powers of man, without daring to inſinuate that it had been obtained by the protection of the *Gods*. The triumphal arch, which was erected

[42] Beſides theſe well-known examples, Tollius (Preface to Boileau's tranſlation of Longinus) has diſcovered a viſion of Antigonus, who aſſured his troops that he had ſeen a pentagon (the ſymbol of ſafety) with theſe words, "In this conquer." But Tollius has moſt inexcuſably omitted to produce his authority; and his own character, literary as well as moral, is not free from reproach (See Chauffepié Dictionnaire Critique, tom. iv. p. 460.). Without inſiſting on the ſilence of Diodorus, Plutarch, Juſtin, &c. it may be obſerved that Polyænus, who in a ſeparate chapter (l. iv. c. 6.) has collected nineteen military ſtratagems of Antigonus, is totally ignorant of this remarkable viſion.

about

about three years after the event, proclaims, in ambiguous language, that, by the greatneſs of his own mind, and by an *inſtinct* or impulſe of the Divinity, he had ſaved and avenged the Roman republic [43]. The pagan orator, who had ſeized an earlier opportunity of celebrating the virtues of the conqueror, ſuppoſes that he alone enjoyed a ſecret and intimate commerce with the Supreme Being, who delegated the care of mortals to his ſubordinate deities; and thus aſſigns a very plauſible reaſon why the ſubjects of Conſtantine ſhould not preſume to embrace the new religion of their ſovereign [44].

CHAP. XX.

III. The philoſopher, who with calm ſuſpicion examines the dreams and omens, the miracles and prodigies, of profane or even of eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, will probably conclude, that if the eyes of the ſpectators have ſometimes been deceived by fraud, the underſtanding of the readers has much more frequently been inſulted by fiction. Every event, or appearance, or accident, which ſeems to deviate from the ordinary courſe of nature, has been raſhly aſcribed to the immediate action of the Deity; and the aſtoniſhed fancy of the multitude has ſometimes given ſhape and colour, language and motion, to the fleeting but

Appearance of a croſs in the ſky.

[43] Inſtinctu Divinitatis, mentis magnitudine. The inſcription on the triumphal arch of Conſtantine, which has been copied by Baronius, Gruter, &c. may ſtill be peruſed by every curious traveller.

[44] Habes profecto aliquid cum illa mente Divinâ ſecretum; quæ delegatâ noſtrâ Diis Minoribus curâ uni ſe tibi dignatur oſtendere. Panegyr. Vet. ix. 2.

CHAP. XX.

uncommon meteors of the air[45]. Nazarius and Eusebius are the two most celebrated orators, who in studied panegyrics, have laboured to exalt the glory of Constantine. Nine years after the Ro-

A. D. 321. man victory, Nazarius[46] describes an army of divine warriors, who seemed to fall from the sky: he marks their beauty, their spirit, their gigantic forms, the stream of light which beamed from their celestial armour, their patience in suffering themselves to be heard, as well as seen, by mortals; and their declaration that they were sent, that they flew, to the assistance of the great Constantine. For the truth of this prodigy, the Pagan orator appeals to the whole Gallic nation, in whose presence he was then speaking; and seems to hope that the ancient apparitions[47] would now obtain credit from this recent and public event. The Christian fable of Eusebius, which, in the

A. D. 338. space of twenty-six years, might arise from the original dream, is cast in a much more correct and elegant mould. In one of the marches of Constantine, he is reported to have seen with his

[45] M. Freret (Memoires de l'Academie des Inscriptions, tom. iv. p. 411—437.) explains, by physical causes, many of the prodigies of antiquity; and Fabricius, who is abused by both parties, vainly tries to introduce the celestial cross of Constantine among the solar Halos. Bibliothec. Græc. tom. vi. p. 8—29.

[46] Nazarius inter Panegyr. Vet. x. 14, 15. It is unnecessary to name the moderns, whose undistinguishing and ravenous appetite has swallowed even the Pagan bait of Nazarius.

[47] The apparitions of Castor and Pollux, particularly to announce the Macedonian victory, are attested by historians and public monuments. See Cicero de Natura Deorum, ii. 2. iii. 5, 6. Florus, ii. 12. Valerius Maximus, l. i. c. 8. N° 1. Yet the most recent of these miracles is omitted, and indirectly denied by Livy (xlv. 1.).

own

own eyes the luminous trophy of the croſs, placed above the meridian ſun, and inſcribed with the following words: BY THIS, CONQUER. This amazing object in the ſky aſtoniſhed the whole army, as well as the emperor himſelf, who was yet undetermined in the choice of a religion; but his aſtoniſhment was converted into faith by the viſion of the enſuing night. Chriſt appeared before his eyes; and diſplaying the ſame celeſtial ſign of the croſs, he directed Conſtantine to frame a ſimilar ſtandard, and to march, with an aſſurance of victory, againſt Maxentius and all his enemies[48]. The learned biſhop of Cæſarea appears to be ſenſible, that the recent diſcovery of this marvellous anecdote would excite ſome ſurpriſe and diſtruſt among the moſt pious of his readers. Yet, inſtead of aſcertaining the preciſe circumſtances of time and place, which always ſerve to detect falſehood, or eſtabliſh truth[49]; inſtead of collecting and recording the evidence of ſo many living witneſſes, who muſt have been ſpectators of this ſtupendous miracle[50]; Euſebius contents himſelf with alleging a very ſingular teſtimony; that of the deceaſed Conſtantine, who, many years after the event, in the freedom of con- CHAP. XX.

[48] Euſebius, l. i. c. 28, 29, 30. The ſilence of the ſame Euſebius, in his Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, is deeply felt by thoſe advocates for the miracle who are not abſolutely callous.

[49] The narrative of Conſtantine ſeems to indicate, that he ſaw the croſs in the ſky before he paſſed the Alps againſt Maxentius. The ſcene has been fixed by provincial vanity at Treves, Beſançon, &c. See Tillemont, des Empereurs, tom. iv. p. 573.

[50] The pious Tillemont (Mem. Eccleſ. tom. vii. p. 1317.) rejects with a ſigh the uſeful Acts of Artemius, a veteran and a martyr, who atteſts as an eye-witneſs the viſion of Conſtantine.

verſation,

CHAP. XX.

verſation, had related to him this extraordinary incident of his own life, and had atteſted the truth of it by a ſolemn oath. The prudence and gratitude of the learned prelate forbade him to ſuſpect the veracity of his victorious maſter; but he plainly intimates, that, in a fact of ſuch a nature, he ſhould have refuſed his aſſent to any meaner authority. This motive of credibility could not ſurvive the power of the Flavian family; and the celeſtial ſign, which the Infidels might afterwards deride [51], was diſregarded by the Chriſtians of the age which immediately followed the converſion of Conſtantine [52]. But the Catholic church, both of the Eaſt and of the Weſt, has adopted a prodigy, which favours, or ſeems to favour, the popular worſhip of the croſs. The viſion of Conſtantine maintained an honourable place in the legend of ſuperſtition, till the bold and ſagacious ſpirit of criticiſm preſumed to depreciate the triumph, and to arraign the truth, of the firſt Chriſtian emperor [53].

The

[51] Gelaſius Cyzic. in Act. Concil. Nicen. l. 1. c. 4.

[52] The advocates for the viſion are unable to produce a ſingle teſtimony from the Fathers of the fourth and fifth centuries, who, in their voluminous writings, repeatedly celebrate the triumph of the church and of Conſtantine. As theſe venerable men had not any diſlike to a miracle, we may ſuſpect (and the ſuſpicion is confirmed by the ignorance of Jerom) that they were all unacquainted with the life of Conſtantine by Euſebius. This tract was recovered by the diligence of thoſe who tranſlated or continued his Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, and who have repreſented in various colours the viſion of the croſs.

[53] Godefroy was the firſt who, in the year 1643 (Not. ad Philoſtorgium, l. i. c. 6. p. 16.), expreſſed any doubt of a miracle which had been ſupported with equal zeal by Cardinal Baronius, and the

CHAP. XX.

The converſion of Conſtantine might be ſincere.

The proteſtant and philoſophic readers of the preſent age will incline to believe, that, in the account of his own converſion, Conſtantine atteſted a wilful falſehood by a ſolemn and deliberate perjury. They may not heſitate to pronounce, that, in the choice of a religion, his mind was determined only by a ſenſe of intereſt; and that (according to the expreſſion of a profane poet [54]) he uſed the altars of the church as a convenient foot-ſtool to the throne of the empire. A concluſion ſo harſh and ſo abſolute is not, however, warranted by our knowledge of human nature, of Conſtantine, or of Chriſtianity. In an age of religious fervour, the moſt artful ſtateſmen are obſerved to feel ſome part of the enthuſiaſm which they inſpire; and the moſt orthodox ſaints aſſume the dangerous privilege of defending the cauſe of

the Centuriators of Magdeburgh. Since that time, many of the Proteſtant critics have inclined towards doubt and diſbelief. The objections are urged, with great force, by M. Chauffepié (Dictionnaire Critique, tom. iv. p. 6—11, and, in the year 1774, a doctor of Sorbonne, the Abbé du Voiſin, publiſhed an Apology, which deſerves the praiſe of learning and moderation.

[54] Lors Conſtantin dit ces propres paroles:
J'ai renverſé le culte des idoles;
Sur les debris de leurs temples fumans
Au Dieu du Ciel j'ai prodigué l'encens.
Mais tous mes ſoins pour ſa grandeur ſupreme
N'eurent jamais d'autre objêt que moi-même;
Les ſaints autels n'etoient à mes regards
Qu'un marchepié du trône des Céſars.
L'ambition, la fureur, les delices
Etoient mes Dieux, avoient mes ſacrifices.
L'or des Chrétiens, leurs intrigues, leu ſang
Ont cimenté ma fortune et mon rang.

The poem which contains theſe lines may be read with pleaſure, but cannot be named with decency.

truth

CHAP. XX.

truth by the arms of deceit and falſehood. Perſonal intereſt is often the ſtandard of our belief, as well as of our practice; and the ſame motives of temporal advantage which might influence the public conduct and profeſſions of Conſtantine, would inſenſibly diſpoſe his mind to embrace a religion ſo propitious to his fame and fortunes. His vanity was gratified by the flattering aſſurance, that *he* had been choſen by Heaven to reign over the earth; ſucceſs had juſtified his divine title to the throne, and that title was founded on the truth of the Chriſtian revelation. As real virtue is ſometimes excited by undeſerved applauſe, the ſpecious piety of Conſtantine, if at firſt it was only ſpecious, might gradually, by the influence of praiſe, of habit, and of example, be matured into ſerious faith and fervent devotion. The biſhops and teachers of the new ſect, whoſe dreſs and manners had not qualified them for the reſidence of a court, were admitted to the Imperial table; they accompanied the monarch in his expeditions; and the aſcendant which one of them, an Egyptian or a Spaniard [55], acquired over his mind, was imputed by the Pagans to the effect of magic [56]. Lactantius, who has adorned the precepts of the

[55] This favourite was probably the great Oſius, biſhop of Cordova, who preferred the paſtoral care of the whole church to the government of a particular dioceſe. His character is magnificently, though conciſely, expreſſed by Athanaſius (tom. i. p. 703.). See Tillemont, Mem. Eccleſ. tom. vii. p. 524—561. Oſius was accuſed, perhaps unjuſtly, of retiring from court with a very ample fortune.

[56] See Euſebius (in Vit. Conſtant. paſſim), and Zoſimus, l. ii. p. 104.

CHAP. XX.

gospel with the eloquence of Cicero[57]; and Eusebius, who has consecrated the learning and philosophy of the Greeks to the service of religion[58], were both received into the friendship and familiarity of their sovereign: and those able masters of controversy could patiently watch the soft and yielding moments of persuasion, and dexterously apply the arguments which were the best adapted to his character and understanding. Whatever advantages might be derived from the acquisition of an Imperial proselyte, he was distinguished by the splendour of his purple, rather than by the superiority of wisdom or virtue, from the many thousands of his subjects who had embraced the doctrines of Christianity. Nor can it be deemed incredible, that the mind of an unlettered soldier should have yielded to the weight of evidence, which, in a more enlightened age, has satisfied or subdued the reason of a Grotius, a Pascal, or a Locke. In the midst of the incessant labours of his great office, this soldier employed, or affected to employ, the hours of the night in the diligent study of the Scriptures, and the composition of theological discourses; which he afterwards pronounced in the presence of a numerous and applauding audience. In a very long discourse,

57 The Christianity of Lactantius was of a moral, rather than of a mysterious cast. "Erat pæne rudis (says the orthodox Bull) disciplinæ Christianæ, et in rhetoricâ melius quam in theologiâ "versatus." Defensio Fidei Nicenæ, sect. ii. c. 14.

58 Fabricius, with his usual diligence, has collected a list of between three and four hundred authors quoted in the Evangelical Preparations of Eusebius. See Bibliothec. Græc. l. v. c. 4. tom. vi. p. 37—56.

which

CHAP. XX.

which is ſtill extant, the royal preacher expatiates on the various proofs of religion; but he dwells with peculiar complacency on the Sybilline verſes [59], and the fourth eclogue of Virgil [60]. Forty years before the birth of Chriſt, the Mantuan bard, as if inſpired by the celeſtial muſe of Iſaiah, had celebrated, with all the pomp of Oriental metaphor, the return of the Virgin, the fall of the ſerpent, the approaching birth of a godlike child, the offspring of the great Jupiter, who ſhould expiate the guilt of human kind, and govern the peaceful univerſe with the virtues of his father; the riſe and appearance of an heavenly race, a primitive nation throughout the world; and the gradual reſtoration of the innocence and felicity of the golden age. The poet was perhaps unconſcious of the ſecret ſenſe and object of theſe ſublime predictions, which have been ſo unworthily applied to the infant ſon of a conſul, or a triumvir [61]: but if a more ſplendid, and indeed ſpecious, interpretation of the fourth eclogue contributed to the converſion of the firſt Chriſtian emperor, Vir-

The fourth eclogue of Virgil.

[59] See Conſtantin. Orat. ad Sanctos, c. 19, 20. He chiefly depends on a myſterious acroſtic, compoſed in the ſixth age after the Deluge by the Erythræan Sybil, and tranſlated by Cicero into Latin. The initial letters of the thirty-four Greek verſes form this prophetic ſentence: JESUS CHRIST, SON OF GOD, SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD.

[60] In his paraphraſe of Virgil, the emperor has frequently aſſiſted and improved the literal ſenſe of the Latin text. See Blondel des Sybilles, l. i. c. 14, 15, 16.

[61] The different claims of an elder and younger ſon of Pollio, of Julia, of Druſus, of Marcellus, are found to be incompatible with chronology, hiſtory, and the good ſenſe of Virgil.

CHAP. XX.

gil may deſerve to be ranked among the moſt ſucceſsful miſſionaries of the goſpel [62].

Devotion and privileges of Conſtantine.

The awful myſteries of the Chriſtian faith and worſhip were concealed from the eyes of ſtrangers, and even of catechumens, with an affected ſecrecy, which ſerved to excite their wonder and curioſity [63]. But the ſevere rules of diſcipline which the prudence of the biſhops had inſtituted, were relaxed by the ſame prudence in favour of an Imperial proſelyte, whom it was ſo important to allure, by every gentle condeſcenſion, into the pale of the church; and Conſtantine was permitted, at leaſt by a tacit diſpenſation, to enjoy *moſt* of the privileges, before he had contracted *any* of the obligations, of a Chriſtian. Inſtead of retiring from the congregation, when the voice of the deacon diſmiſſed the profane multitude, he prayed with the faithful, diſputed with the biſhops, preached on the moſt ſublime and intricate ſubjects of theology, celebrated with ſacred rites the vigil of Eaſter, and publicly declared himſelf, not only a partaker, but, in ſome meaſure, a prieſt

[62] See Lowth de Sacra Poeſi Hebræorum Prælect. xxi. p. 289—293. In the examination of the fourth eclogue, the reſpectable biſhop of London has diſplayed learning, taſte, ingenuity, and a temperate enthuſiaſm, which exalts his fancy without degrading his judgment.

[63] The diſtinction between the public and the ſecret parts of divine ſervice, the *miſſa catechumenorum*, and the *miſſa fidelium*, and the myſterious veil which piety or policy had caſt over the latter, are very judiciouſly explained by Thiers, Expoſition du Saint Sacrement, l. i. c. 8—12. p. 59—91; but as, on this ſubject, the Papiſts may reaſonably be ſuſpected, a Proteſtant reader will depend with more confidence on the learned Bingham. Antiquities, l. x. c. 5.

and

CHAP. XX.

and hierophant of the Chriſtian myſteries [64]. The pride of Conſtantine might aſſume, and his ſervices had deſerved, ſome extraordinary diſtinction: an ill-timed rigour might have blaſted the unripened fruits of his converſion; and if the doors of the church had been ſtrictly cloſed againſt a prince who had deſerted the altars of the gods, the maſter of the empire would have been left deſtitute of any form of religious worſhip. In his laſt viſit to Rome, he piouſly diſclaimed and inſulted the ſuperſtition of his anceſtors, by refuſing to lead the military proceſſion of the equeſtrian order, and to offer the public vows to the Jupiter of the Capitoline Hill [65]. Many years before his baptiſm and death, Conſtantine had proclaimed to the world, that neither his perſon nor his image ſhould ever more be ſeen within the walls of an idolatrous temple; while he diſtributed through the provinces a variety of medals and pictures, which repreſented the emperor in an humble and ſuppliant poſture of Chriſtian devotion [66].

Delay of his baptiſm till the approach of death.

The pride of Conſtantine, who refuſed the privileges of a catechumen, cannot eaſily be explained or excuſed; but the delay of his baptiſm may be juſtified by the maxims and the practice of eccleſiaſtical antiquity. The ſacrament of bap-

[64] See Euſebius in Vit. Conſt. l. iv. c. 15—32. and the whole tenor of Conſtantine's Sermon. The faith and devotion of the emperor has furniſhed Baronius with a ſpecious argument in favour of his early baptiſm.

[65] Zoſimus, l. ii. p. 105.

[66] Euſebius in Vit. Conſtant. l. iv. c. 15, 16.

tiſm

CHAP. XX.

tiſm[67] was regularly adminiſtered by the biſhop himſelf, with his aſſiſtant clergy, in the cathedral church of the dioceſe, during the fifty days between the ſolemn feſtivals of Eaſter and Pentecoſt; and this holy term admitted a numerous band of infants and adult perſons into the boſom of the church. The diſcretion of parents often ſuſpended the baptiſm of their children till they could underſtand the obligations which they contracted; the ſeverity of ancient biſhops exacted from the new converts a noviciate of two or three years; and the catechumens themſelves, from different motives of a temporal or a ſpiritual nature, were ſeldom impatient to aſſume the character of perfect and initiated Chriſtians. The ſacrament of baptiſm was ſuppoſed to contain a full and abſolute expiation of ſin; and the ſoul was inſtantly reſtored to its original purity, and entitled to the promiſe of eternal ſalvation. Among the proſelytes of Chriſtianity, there were many who judged it imprudent to precipitate a ſalutary rite, which could not be repeated; to throw away an ineſtimable privilege, which could never be recovered. By the delay of their baptiſm, they could venture freely to indulge their paſſions in

67 The theory and practice of antiquity with regard to the ſacrament of baptiſm, have been copiouſly explained by Dom. Chardon, Hiſt. des Sacremens, tom. i. p. 3—405; Dom. Martenne, de Ritibus Eccleſiæ Antiquis, tom. i.; and by Bingham, in the tenth and eleventh books of his Chriſtian Antiquities. One circumſtance may be obſerved, in which the modern churches have materially departed from the ancient cuſtom. The ſacrament of baptiſm (even when it was adminiſtered to infants) was immediately followed by confirmation and the holy communion.

CHAP. XX.

the enjoyments of this world, while they ſtill retained in their own hands the means of a ſure and eaſy abſolution[68]. The ſublime theory of the goſpel had made a much fainter impreſſion on the heart, than on the underſtanding of Conſtantine himſelf. He purſued the great object of his ambition through the dark and bloody paths of war and policy; and, after the victory, he abandoned himſelf, without moderation, to the abuſe of his fortune. Inſtead of aſſerting his juſt ſuperiority above the imperfect heroiſm and prophane philoſophy of Trajan and the Antonines, the mature age of Conſtantine forfeited the reputation which he had acquired in his youth. As he gradually advanced in the knowledge of truth, he proportionably declined in the practice of virtue; and the ſame year of his reign in which he convened the council of Nice, was polluted by the execution, or rather murder, of his eldeſt ſon. This date is alone ſufficient to refute the ignorant and mali-

[68] The fathers, who cenſured this criminal delay, could not deny the certain and victorious efficacy even of a death bed baptiſm. The ingenious rhetoric of Chryſoſtom could find only three arguments againſt theſe prudent Chriſtians. 1. That we ſhould love and purſue virtue for her own ſake, and not merely for the reward. 2. That we may be ſurpriſed by death without an opportunity of baptiſm. 3. That although we ſhall be placed in heaven, we ſhall only twinkle like little ſtars, when compared to the ſuns of righteouſneſs who have run their appointed courſe with labour, with ſucceſs, and with glory. Chryſoſtom in Epiſt. ad Hebræos, Homil. xiii. apud Chardon, Hiſt. des Sacremens, tom. i. p. 49. I believe that this delay of baptiſm, though attended with the moſt pernicious conſequences, was never condemned by any general or provincial council, or by any public act or declaration of the church. The zeal of the biſhops was eaſily kindled on much ſlighter occaſions.

cious

cious ſuggeſtions of Zoſimus [69], who affirms, that after the death of Criſpus, the remorſe of his father accepted from the miniſters of Chriſtianity the expiation which he had vainly ſolicited from the Pagan pontiffs. At the time of the death of Criſpus, the emperor could no longer heſitate in the choice of a religion; he could no longer be ignorant that the church was poſſeſſed of an infallible remedy, though he choſe to defer the application of it, till the approach of death had removed the temptation and danger of a relapſe. The biſhops, whom he ſummoned in his laſt illneſs to the palace of Nicomedia, were edified by the fervour with which he requeſted and received the ſacrament of baptiſm, by the ſolemn proteſtation that the remainder of his life ſhould be worthy of a diſciple of Chriſt, and by his humble refuſal to wear the Imperial purple after he had been clothed in the white garment of a Neophyte. The example and reputation of Conſtantine ſeemed to countenance the delay of baptiſm [70]. Future tyrants were encouraged to believe, that the innocent blood which they might ſhed in a long reign would inſtantly be waſhed away in the waters of regeneration; and the abuſe of religion dangerouſly undermined the foundations of moral virtue.

[69] Zoſimus, l. ii. p. 104. For this diſingenuous falſehood he has deſerved and experienced the harſheſt treatment from all the eccleſiaſtical writers, except Cardinal Baronius (A. D. 324, N° 15—28), who had occaſion to employ the infidel on a particular ſervice againſt the Arian Euſebius.

[70] Euſebius, l. iv. c. 61, 62, 63. The biſhop of Cæſarea ſuppoſes the ſalvation of Conſtantine with the moſt perfect confidence.

CHAP. XX.

Propagation of Christianity.

The gratitude of the church has exalted the virtues and excused the failings of a generous patron, who seated Christianity on the throne of the Roman world; and the Greeks, who celebrate the festival of the Imperial saint, seldom mention the name of Constantine without adding the title of *equal to the Apostles*[71]. Such a comparison, if it allude to the character of those divine missionaries, must be imputed to the extravagance of impious flattery. But if the parallel be confined to the extent and number of their evangelic victories, the success of Constantine might perhaps equal that of the Apostles themselves. By the edicts of toleration, he removed the temporal disadvantages which had hitherto retarded the progress of Christianity; and its active and numerous ministers received a free permission, a liberal encouragement, to recommend the salutary truths of revelation by every argument which could affect the reason or piety of mankind. The exact balance of the two religions continued but a moment; and the piercing eye of ambition and avarice soon discovered, that the profession of Christianity might contribute to the interest of the present, as well as of a future life[72]. The hopes of wealth and honours, the example of an emperor, his exhortations, his

[71] See Tillemont, Hist. des Empereurs, tom. iv. p. 429. The Greeks, the Russians, and, in the darker ages, the Latins themselves, have been desirous of placing Constantine in the catalogue of saints.

[72] See the third and fourth books of his life. He was accustomed to say, that whether Christ was preached in pretence or in truth, he should still rejoice (l. iii. c. 58.).

irresistible

irreſiſtible ſmiles, diffuſed conviction among the venal and obſequious crowds which uſually fill the apartments of a palace. The cities which ſignalized a forward zeal, by the voluntary deſtruction of their temples, were diſtinguiſhed by municipal privileges, and rewarded with popular donatives; and the new capital of the Eaſt gloried in the ſingular advantage, that Conſtantinople was never profaned by the worſhip of idols [73]. As the lower ranks of ſociety are governed by imitation, the converſion of thoſe who poſſeſſed any eminence of birth, of power, or of riches, was ſoon followed by dependent multitudes [74]. The ſalvation of the common people was purchaſed at an eaſy rate, if it be true, that, in one year, twelve thouſand men were baptiſed at Rome, beſides a proportionable number of women and children; and that a white garment, with twenty pieces of gold, had been promiſed by the em-

CHAP. XX.

[73] M. de Tillemont (Hiſt. des Empereurs, tom. iv. p. 374. 616.) has defended, with ſtrength and ſpirit, the virgin purity of Conſtantinople againſt ſome malevolent inſinuations of the Pagan Zoſimus.

[74] The author of the Hiſtoire Politique et Philoſophique des deux Indes (tom. i. p. 9.) condemns a law of Conſtantine, which gave freedom to all the ſlaves who ſhould embrace Chriſtianity. The emperor did indeed publiſh a law, which reſtrained the Jews from circumciſing, perhaps from keeping, any Chriſtian ſlaves (ſee Euſeb. in Vit. Conſtant. l. iv. c. 27. and Cod. Theod. l. xvi. tit. ix. with Godefroy's Commentary, tom. vi. p. 247.). But this imperfect exception related only to the Jews; and the great body of ſlaves, who were the property of Chriſtian or Pagan maſters, could not improve their temporal condition by changing their religion. I am ignorant by what guides the Abbé Raynal was deceived; as the total abſence of quotations is the unpardonable blemiſh of his entertaining hiſtory.

CHAP. XX.

peror to every convert [75]. The powerful influence of Conſtantine was not circumſcribed by the narrow limits of his life, or of his dominions. The education which he beſtowed on his ſons and nephews, ſecured to the empire a race of princes, whoſe faith was ſtill more lively and ſincere, as they imbibed, in their earlieſt infancy, the ſpirit, or at leaſt the doctrine, of Chriſtianity. War and commerce had ſpread the knowledge of the goſpel beyond the confines of the Roman provinces; and the Barbarians, who had diſdained an humble and proſcribed ſect, ſoon learned to eſteem a religion which had been ſo lately embraced by the greateſt monarch, and the moſt civilized nation of the globe [76]. The Goths and Germans, who enliſted under the ſtandard of Rome, revered the croſs which glittered at the head of the legions, and their fierce countrymen received at the ſame time the leſſons of faith and of humanity. The kings of Iberia and Armenia worſhipped the

[75] See Acta S[ti] Silveſtri, and Hiſt. Eccleſ. Nicephor. Calliſt. l. vii. c. 34. ap. Baronium Annal. Eccleſ. A. D. 324, N° 67. 74. Such evidence is contemptible enough; but theſe circumſtances are in themſelves ſo probable, that the learned Dr. Howell (Hiſtory of the World, vol. iv. p. 14.) has not ſcrupled to adopt them.

[76] The converſion of the Barbarians under the reign of Conſtantine is celebrated by the eccleſiaſtical hiſtorians (See Sozomen, l. ii. c. 6. and Throdoret, l. i. c. 23, 24.). But Rufinus, the Latin tranſlator of Euſebius, deſerves to be conſidered as an original authority. His information was curiouſly collected from one of the companions of the Apoſtle of Æthiopia, and from Bacurius, an Iberian prince, who was count of the domeſtics. Father Mamachi has given an ample compilation on the progreſs of Chriſtianity, in the firſt and ſecond volumes of his great but imperfect work.

God

God of their protector; and their subjects, who have invariably preserved the name of Christians, soon formed a sacred and perpetual connection with their Roman brethren. The Christians of Persia were suspected, in time of war, of preferring their religion to their country; but as long as peace subsisted between the two empires, the persecuting spirit of the Magi was effectually restrained by the interposition of Constantine [77]. The rays of the gospel illuminated the coast of India. The colonies of Jews, who had penetrated into Arabia and Æthiopia [78], opposed the progress of Christianity; but the labours of the missionaries was in some measure facilitated by a previous knowledge of the Mosaic revelation; and Abyssinia still reveres the memory of Frumentius, who, in the time of Constantine, devoted his life to the conversion of those sequestered regions. Under the reign of his son Constantius, Theophilus [79], who was himself of Indian extraction, was invested with the double character of ambassador

77 See in Eusebius (in Vit. Constant. l. iv. c. 9.) the pressing and pathetic epistle of Constantine in favour of his Christian brethren of Persia.

78 See Basnage, Hist. des Juifs, tom. vii. p. 182. tom. viii. p. 333. tom. ix. p. 810. The curious diligence of this writer pursues the Jewish exiles to the extremities of the globe.

79 Theophilus had been given in his infancy as a hostage by his countrymen of the isle of Diva, and was educated by the Romans in learning and piety. The Maldives, of which Male, or *Diva*, may be the capital, are a cluster of 1900 or 12000 minute islands in the Indian ocean. The ancients were imperfectly acquainted with the Maldives; but they are described in the two Mahometan travellers of the ninth century, published by Renaudot. Geograph. Nubiensis, p. 30, 31. D'Herbelot, Bibliotheque Orientale, p. 704. Hist. Generale des Voyages, tom. viii.

CHAP. XX.

and biſhop. He embarked on the Red Sea with two hundred horſes of the pureſt breed of Cappadocia, which were ſent by the emperor to the prince of the Sabæans, or Homerites. Theophilus was entruſted with many other uſeful or curious preſents, which might raiſe the admiration, and conciliate the friendſhip, of the Barbarians; and he ſucceſsfully employed ſeveral years in a paſtoral viſit to the churches of the torrid zone [80].

Change of the national religion.

The irreſiſtible power of the Roman emperors was diſplayed in the important and dangerous change of the national religion. The terrors of a military force ſilenced the faint and unſupported murmurs of the Pagans, and there was reaſon to expect, that the chearful ſubmiſſion of the Chriſtian clergy, as well as people, would be the reſult of conſcience and gratitude. It was long ſince eſtabliſhed, as a fundamental maxim of the Roman conſtitution, that every rank of citizens were alike ſubject to the laws, and that the care of religion was the right as well as duty of the civil magiſtrate. Conſtantine and his ſucceſſors could not eaſily perſuade themſelves that they had forfeited, by their converſion, any branch of the Imperial prerogatives, or that they were incapable of giving laws to a religion which they had protected and embraced. The emperors ſtill continued to exerciſe a ſupreme juriſdiction over the eccleſiaſtical order; and the ſixteenth book of the

A. D. 312—438.

[80] Philoſtorgius, l. iii. c. 4, 5, 6, with Godefroy's learned obſervations. The hiſtorical narrative is ſoon loſt in an inquiry concerning the ſeat of paradiſe, ſtrange monſters, &c.

Theodoſian

CHAP. XX.

Theodoſian code repreſents, under a variety of titles, the authority which they aſſumed in the government of the Catholic church.

Diſtinction of the ſpiritual and temporal powers.

But the diſtinction of the ſpiritual and temporal powers [81], which had never been impoſed on the free ſpirit of Greece and Rome, was introduced and confirmed by the legal eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity. The office of ſupreme pontiff, which, from the time of Numa to that of Auguſtus, had always been exerciſed by one of the moſt eminent of the ſenators, was at length united to the Imperial dignity. The firſt magiſtrate of the ſtate, as often as he was prompted by ſuperſtition or policy, performed with his own hands the ſacerdotal functions [82]; nor was there any order of prieſts, either at Rome or in the provinces, who claimed a more ſacred character among men, or a more intimate communication with the Gods. But in the Chriſtian church, which entruſts the ſervice of the altar to a perpetual ſucceſſion of conſecrated miniſters, the monarch, whoſe ſpiritual rank is leſs honourable than that of the meaneſt deacon, was ſeated below the rails of the ſanctuary, and confounded with the reſt of the faithful multitude [83].

The

[81] See the epiſtle of Oſius, ap. Athanaſium, vol. i. p. 840. The public remonſtrance which Oſius was forced to addreſs to the ſon, contained the ſame principles of eccleſiaſtical and civil government which he had ſecretly inſtilled into the mind of the father.

[82] M. de la Baſtie (Memoires de l'Academie des Inſcriptions, tom. xv. p. 38—61.) has evidently proved, that Auguſtus and his ſucceſſors exerciſed in perſon all the ſacred functions of pontifex maximus, or high-prieſt of the Roman empire.

[83] Something of a contrary practice had inſenſibly prevailed in the church of Conſtantinople; but the rigid Ambroſe commanded Theodoſius

CHAP. XX.

The emperor might be ſaluted as the father of his people, but he owed a filial duty and reverence to the fathers of the church; and the ſame marks of reſpect, which Conſtantine had paid to the perſons of ſaints and confeſſors, were ſoon exacted by the pride of the epiſcopal order [84]. A ſecret conflict between the civil and eccleſiaſtical juriſdictions, embarraſſed the operations of the Roman government; and a pious emperor was alarmed by the guilt and danger of touching with a profane hand the ark of the covenant. The ſeparation of men into the two orders of the clergy and of the laity was, indeed, familiar to many nations of antiquity; and the prieſts of India, of Perſia, of Aſſyria, of Judea, of Æthiopia, of Egypt, and of Gaul, derived from a celeſtial origin the temporal power and poſſeſſions which they had acquired. Theſe venerable inſtitutions had gradually aſſimilated themſelves to the manners and government of their reſpective countries [85]; but the oppoſition or

deſius to retire below the rails, and taught him to know the difference between a king and a prieſt. See Theodoret, l. v. c. 18.

[84] At the table of the emperor Maximus, Martin, biſhop of Tours, received the cup from an attendant, and gave it to the preſbyter his companion, before he allowed the emperor to drink; the empreſs waited on Martin at table. Sulpicius Severus, in Vit. St Martin. c. 23. and Dialogue ii. 7. Yet it may be doubted, whether theſe extraordinary compliments were paid to the biſhop or the ſaint. The honours uſually granted to the former character may be ſeen in Bingham's Antiquities, l. ii. c. 9. and Valeſ. ad Theodoret, l. iv. c. 6. See the haughty ceremonial which Leontius, biſhop of Tripoli, impoſed on the empreſs. Tillemont, Hiſt. des Empereurs, tom. iv. p. 754. Patres Apoſtol. tom. ii. p. 179.

[85] Plutarch, in his treatiſe of Iſis and Oſiris, informs us, that the kings of Egypt, who were not already prieſts, were initiated, after their election, into the ſacerdotal order.

contempt

CHAP. XX.

contempt of the civil power ſerved to cement the diſcipline of the primitive church. The Chriſtians had been obliged to elect their own magiſtrates, to raiſe and diſtribute a peculiar revenue, and to regulate the internal policy of their republic by a code of laws, which were ratified by the conſent of the people, and the practice of three hundred years. When Conſtantine embraced the faith of the Chriſtians, he ſeemed to contract a perpetual alliance with a diſtinct and independent ſociety; and the privileges granted or confirmed by that emperor, or by his ſucceſſors, were accepted, not as the precarious favours of the court, but as the juſt and inalienable rights of the eccleſiaſtical order.

State of the biſhops under the Chriſtian emperors.

The Catholic church was adminiſtered by the ſpiritual and legal juriſdiction of eighteen hundred biſhops[86]; of whom one thouſand were ſeated in the Greek, and eight hundred in the Latin, provinces of the empire. The extent and boundaries of their reſpective dioceſes, had been variouſly and accidentally decided by the zeal and ſucceſs of the firſt miſſionaries, by the wiſhes of the people, and by the propagation of the goſpel. Epiſcopal churches were cloſely planted along the banks of the Nile, on the ſea-coaſt of Africa, in the pro-

[86] The numbers are not aſcertained by any ancient writer, or original catalogue; for the partial liſts of the eaſtern churches are comparatively modern. The patient diligence of Charles a S^to^ Paolo, of Luke Holſtenius, and of Bingham, has laborioufly inveſtigated all the epiſcopal ſees of the Catholic church, which was almoſt commenſurate with the Roman empire. The ninth book of the Chriſtian Antiquities is a very accurate map of eccleſiaſtical geography.

conſular

CHAP. XX.

conſular Aſia, and through the ſouthern provinces of Italy. The biſhops of Gaul and Spain, of Thrace and Pontus, reigned over an ample territory, and delegated their rural ſuffragans to execute the ſubordinate duties of the paſtoral office [87]. A Chriſtian dioceſe might be ſpread over a province, or reduced to a village; but all the biſhops poſſeſſed an equal and indelible character: they all derived the ſame powers and privileges from the apoſtles, from the people, and from the laws. While the *civil* and *military* profeſſions were ſeparated by the policy of Conſtantine, a new and perpetual order of *eccleſiaſtical* miniſters, always reſpectable, ſometimes dangerous, was eſtabliſhed in the church and ſtate. The important review of their ſtation and attributes may be diſtributed under the following heads: I. Popular election. II. Ordination of the clergy. III. Property. IV. Civil juriſdiction. V. Spiritual cenſures. VI. Exerciſe of public oratory. VII. Privilege of legiſlative aſſemblies.

I. Election of biſhops.

I. The freedom of elections ſubſiſted long after the legal eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity [88]; and the

[87] On the ſubject of the rural biſhops, or *Chorepiſcopi*, who voted in ſynods, and conferred the minor orders, ſee Thomaſſin, Diſcipline de l'Egliſe, tom. i. p. 447, &c. and Chardon, Hiſt. des Sacremens, tom. v. p. 595, &c. They do not appear till the fourth century; and this equivocal character, which had excited the jealouſy of the prelates, was aboliſhed before the end of the tenth, both in the Eaſt and the Weſt.

[88] Thomaſſin (Diſcipline de l'Egliſe, tom. ii. l. ii. c. 1—8. p. 673—721.) has copiouſly treated of the election of biſhops during the five firſt centuries, both in the Eaſt and in the Weſt; but he ſhews a very partial bias in favour of the epiſcopal ariſtocracy. Bingham (l. iv. c. 2.) is moderate; and Chardon (Hiſt. des Sacremens, tom. v. p. 108—128.) is very clear and conciſe.

CHAP. XX.

ſubjects of Rome enjoyed in the church the privilege which they had loſt in the republic, of chuſing the magiſtrates whom they were bound to obey. As ſoon as a biſhop had cloſed his eyes, the metropolitan iſſued a commiſſion to one of his ſuffragans to adminiſter the vacant ſee, and prepare, within a limited time, the future election. The right of voting was veſted in the inferior clergy, who were beſt qualified to judge of the merit of the candidates; in the ſenators or nobles of the city, all thoſe who were diſtinguiſhed by their rank or property; and finally in the whole body of the people, who, on the appointed day, flocked in multitudes from the moſt remote parts of the dioceſe [89], and ſometimes ſilenced, by their tumultuous acclamations, the voice of reaſon and the laws of diſcipline. Theſe acclamations might accidentally fix on the head of the moſt deſerving competitor; of ſome ancient preſbyter, ſome holy monk, or ſome layman, conſpicuous for his zeal and piety. But the epiſcopal chair was ſolicited, eſpecially in the great and opulent cities of the empire, as a temporal, rather than as a ſpiritual dignity. The intereſted views, the ſelfiſh and angry paſſions, the arts of perfidy and diſſimulation, the ſecret corruption, the open and even bloody violence which had formerly diſgraced the freedom of election in the common-

[89] Incredibilis multitudo, non ſolum ex eo oppido (*Tours*), ſed etiam ex vicinis urbibus ad ſuffragia ferenda convenerat, &c. Sulpicius Severus, in Vit. Martin. c. 7. The council of Laodicea (canon xiii.) prohibits mobs and tumults; and Juſtinian confines the right of election to the nobility. Novell. cxxiii. 1.

wealths

CHAP. XX.

wealths of Greece and Rome, too often influenced the choice of the ſucceſſors of the apoſtles. While one of the candidates boaſted the honours of his family, a ſecond allured his judges by the delicacies of a plentiful table, and a third, more guilty than his rivals, offered to ſhare the plunder of the church among the accomplices of his ſacrilegious hopes [90]. The civil as well as eccleſiaſtical laws attempted to exclude the populace from this ſolemn and important tranſaction. The canons of ancient diſcipline, by requiring ſeveral epiſcopal qualifications of age, ſtation, &c. reſtrained in ſome meaſure the indiſcriminate caprice of the electors. The authority of the provincial biſhops, who were aſſembled in the vacant church to conſecrate the choice of the people, was interpoſed to moderate their paſſions, and to correct their miſtakes. The biſhops could refuſe to ordain an unworthy candidate, and the rage of contending factions ſometimes accepted their impartial mediation. The ſubmiſſion, or the reſiſtance, of the clergy and people, on various occaſions, afforded different precedents, which were inſenſibly converted into poſitive laws, and provincial cuſtoms [91]: but it was every where admitted, as a fundamental maxim of religious policy, that no biſhop could be impoſed on an orthodox church, without the conſent of its members. The emperors, as the

[90] The epiſtles of Sidonius Apollinaris (iv. 25. vii. 5. 9.) exhibit ſome of the ſcandals of the Gallican church; and Gaul was leſs poliſhed and leſs corrupt than the Eaſt.

[91] A compromiſe was ſometimes introduced by law or by conſent; either the biſhops or the people choſe one of the three candidates who had been named by the other party.

CHAP. XX.

guardians of the public peace, and as the firſt citizens of Rome and Conſtantinople, might effectually declare their wiſhes in the choice of a primate: but thoſe abſolute monarchs reſpected the freedom of eccleſiaſtical elections; and while they diſtributed and reſumed the honours of the ſtate and army, they allowed eighteen hundred perpetual magiſtrates to receive their important offices from the free ſuffrages of the people[92]. It was agreeable to the dictates of juſtice, that theſe magiſtrates ſhould not deſert an honourable ſtation from which they could not be removed; but the wiſdom of councils endeavoured, without much ſucceſs, to enforce the reſidence, and to prevent the tranſlation of biſhops. The diſcipline of the Weſt was indeed leſs relaxed than that of the Eaſt; but the ſame paſſions which made thoſe regulations neceſſary, rendered them ineffectual. The reproaches which angry prelates have ſo vehemently urged againſt each other, ſerve only to expoſe their common guilt, and their mutual indiſcretion.

II. Ordination of the clergy.

II. The biſhops alone poſſeſſed the faculty of *ſpiritual* generation; and this extraordinary privilege might compenſate, in ſome degree, for the painful celibacy[93] which was impoſed as a virtue, as

[92] All the examples quoted by Thomaſſin (Diſcipline de l'Egliſe, tom. ii. l. ii. c. 6. p. 704—714.) appear to be extraordinary acts of power, and even of oppreſſion. The confirmation of the biſhop of Alexandria is mentioned by Philoſtorgius as a more regular proceeding (Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. ii. 11.).

[93] The celibacy of the clergy during the firſt five or ſix centuries, is a ſubject of diſcipline, and indeed of controverſy, which has been very diligently examined. See in particular Thomaſſin, Diſcipline de

CHAP. XX.

as a duty, and at length as a positive obligation. The religions of antiquity, which established a separate order of priests, dedicated a holy race, a tribe or family, to the perpetual service of the Gods [94]. Such institutions were founded for possession, rather than conquest. The children of the priests enjoyed, with proud and indolent security, their sacred inheritance; and the fiery spirit of enthusiasm was abated by the cares, the pleasures, and the endearments of domestic life. But the christian sanctuary was open to every ambitious candidate, who aspired to its heavenly promises, or temporal possessions. The office of priests, like that of soldiers or magistrates, was strenuously exercised by those men, whose temper and abilities had prompted them to embrace the ecclesiastical profession, or who had been selected by a discerning bishop, as the best qualified to promote the glory and interest of the church. The bishops [95] (till the abuse was restrained by the

de l'Eglise, tom. i. l. ii. c. lx, lxi. p. 886—902. and Bingham's Antiquities, l. iv. c. 5. By each of these learned but partial critics, one half of the truth is produced, and the other is concealed.

94 Diodorus Siculus attests and approves the hereditary succession of the priesthood among the Egyptians, the Chaldeans, and the Indians (l. i. p. 84. l. ii. p. 142. 153. edit. Wesseling). The magi are described by Ammianus as a very numerous family: "Per sæcula "multa ad præsens una eâdemque profapiâ multitudo creata, Deo- "rum cultibus dedicata (xxiii 6)." Ausonius celebrates the *Stirps Druidarum* (De Professorib. Burdigal. iv.); but we may infer from the remark of Cæsar (vi. 13.), that, in the Celtic hierarchy, some room was left for choice and emulation.

95 The subject of the vocation, ordination, obedience, &c. of the clergy, is laboriously discussed by Thomassin (Discipline de l'Eglise, tom. ii. p. 1—83.) and Bingham (in the 4th book of his Antiquities, more especially the 4th, 6th, and 7th chapters). When the brother

CHAP. XX.

the prudence of the laws) might conſtrain the reluctant, and protect the diſtreſſed; and the impoſition of hands for ever beſtowed ſome of the moſt valuable privileges of civil ſociety. The whole body of the Catholic clergy, more numerous perhaps than the legions, was exempted by the emperors from all ſervice, private or public, all municipal offices, and all perſonal taxes and contributions, which preſſed on their fellow-citizens with intolerable weight; and the duties of their holy profeſſion were accepted as a full diſcharge of their obligations to the republic[96]. Each biſhop acquired an abſolute and indefeaſible right to the perpetual obedience of the clerk whom he ordained: the clergy of each epiſcopal church, with its dependent pariſhes, formed a regular and permanent ſociety; and the cathedrals of Conſtantinople[97] and Carthage[98] maintained their peculiar

brother of St. Jerom was ordained in Cyprus, the deacons forcibly ſtopped his mouth, leſt he ſhould make a ſolemn proteſtation, which might invalidate the holy rites.

[95] The charter of immunities, which the clergy obtained from the Chriſtian emperors, is contained in the 16th book of the Theodoſian code; and is illuſtrated with tolerable candour by the learned Godefroy, whoſe mind was balanced by the oppoſite prejudices of a civilian and a proteſtant.

[97] Juſtinian, Novell. ciii. Sixty preſbyters, or prieſts, one hundred deacons, forty deaconeſſes, ninety ſub-deacons, one hundred and ten readers, twenty-five chanters, and one hundred door-keepers; in all, five hundred and twenty-five. This moderate number was fixed by the emperor, to relieve the diſtreſs of the church, which had been involved in debt and uſury by the expence of a much higher eſtabliſhment.

[98] Univerſus clerus eccleſiæ Carthaginienſis . . . fere *quingenti* vel amplius; inter quos quamplurimi erant lectores infantuli. Victor Vitenſis, de Perſecut. Vandal. v. 9. p. 78. edit. Ruinart. This

CHAP. XX.

culiar eſtabliſhment of five hundred eccleſiaſtical miniſters. Their ranks[99] and numbers were inſenſibly multiplied by the ſuperſtition of the times, which introduced into the church the ſplendid ceremonies of a Jewiſh or Pagan temple; and a long train of prieſts, deacons, ſub-deacons, acolythes, exorciſts, readers, ſingers, and door-keepers, contributed, in their reſpective ſtations, to ſwell the pomp and harmony of religious worſhip. The clerical name and privilege were extended to many pious fraternities, who devoutly ſupported the eccleſiaſtical throne[100]. Six hundred *parabolani*, or adventurers, viſited the ſick at Alexandria; eleven hundred *copiatæ*, or grave-diggers, buried the dead at Conſtantinople; and the ſwarms of monks, who aroſe from the Nile, overſpread and darkened the face of the Chriſtian world.

III. Property. A. D. 313.

III. The edict of Milan ſecured the revenue as well as the peace of the church[101]. The Chriſtians not only recovered the lands and houſes of which they had been ſtripped by the perſecuting laws of

remnant of a more proſperous ſtate ſubſiſted under the oppreſſion of the Vandals.

99 The number of *ſeven* orders has been fixed in the Latin church, excluſive of the epiſcopal character. But the four inferior ranks, the minor orders, are now reduced to empty and uſeleſs titles.

100 See Cod. Theodoſ. l. xvi. tit. 2. leg. 42, 43. *Godefroy's* Commentary, and the Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory of Alexandria, ſhew the danger of theſe pious inſtitutions, which often diſturbed the peace of that turbulent capital.

101 The edict of Milan (de M. P. c. 48.) acknowledges, by reciting, that there exiſted a ſpecies of landed property, ad jus corporis eorum, id eſt, eccleſiarum non hominum ſingulorum pertinentia. Such a ſolemn declaration of the ſupreme magiſtrate muſt have been received in all the tribunals as a maxim of civil law.

Diocletian,

Diocletian, but they acquired a perfect title to all the poſſeſſions which they had hitherto enjoyed by the connivance of the magiſtrate. As ſoon as Chriſtianity became the religion of the emperor and the empire, the national clergy might claim a decent and honourable maintenance: and the payment of an annual tax might have delivered the people from the more oppreſſive tribute, which ſuperſtition impoſes on her votaries. But as the wants and expences of the church increaſed with her proſperity, the eccleſiaſtical order was ſtill ſupported and enriched by the voluntary oblations of the faithful. Eight years after the edict of Milan, Conſtantine granted to all his ſubjects the free and univerſal permiſſion of bequeathing their fortunes to the holy Catholic church[102]; and their devout liberality, which during their lives was checked by luxury or avarice, flowed with a profuſe ſtream at the hour of their death. The wealthy Chriſtians were encouraged by the example of their ſovereign. An abſolute monarch, who is rich without patrimony, may be charitable without merit; and Conſtantine too eaſily believed that he ſhould purchaſe the favour of Heaven, if he maintained the idle at the expence of the induſtrious; and diſtributed among the ſaints the wealth of the republic. The ſame meſſenger who carried over

CHAP. XX.

A. D. 321.

[102] Habeat unuſquiſque licentiam ſanctiſſimo Catholicæ (*eccleſiæ*) venerabilique concilio, decedens bonorum quod optavit relinquere. Cod. Theodoſ. l. xvi. tit. ii. leg. 4. This law was publiſhed at Rome, A. D. 321, at a time when Conſtantine might foreſee the probability of a rupture with the emperor of the Eaſt.

CHAP. XX.

to Africa the head of Maxentius, might be entruſted with an epiſtle to Cæcilian, biſhop of Carthage. The emperor acquaints him, that the treaſurers of the province are directed to pay into his hands the ſum of three thouſand *folles*, or eighteen thouſand pounds ſterling, and to obey his farther requiſitions for the relief of the churches of Africa, Numidia, and Mauritania [103]. The liberality of Conſtantine increaſed in a juſt proportion to his faith, and to his vices. He aſſigned in each city a regular allowance of corn, to ſupply the fund of eccleſiaſtical charity; and the perſons of both ſexes who embraced the monaſtic life, became the peculiar favourites of their ſovereign. The Chriſtian temples of Antioch, Alexandria, Jeruſalem, Conſtantinople, &c. diſplayed the oſtentatious piety of a prince, ambitious in a declining age to equal the perfect labours of antiquity [104]. The form of theſe religious edifices was ſimple and oblong; though they might ſometimes ſwell into the ſhape of a dome, and ſometimes branch into the figure of a croſs. The timbers were framed for the moſt part of cedars of Libanus; the roof was covered

[103] Euſebius, Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. x. 6. in Vit. Conſtantin. l. iv. c. 28. He repeatedly expatiates on the liberality of the Chriſtian hero, which the biſhop himſelf had an opportunity of knowing, and even of taſting.

[104] Euſebius, Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. x. c. 2, 3, 4. The biſhop of Cæſarea, who ſtudied and gratified the taſte of his maſter, pronounced in public an elaborate deſcription of the church of Jeruſalem (in Vit. Conſ. l. iv. c. 46.). It no longer exiſts, but he has inſerted *in the* life of Conſtantine (l. iii. c. 36.), a ſhort account of the architecture and ornaments. He likewiſe mentions the church of the holy Apoſtles at Conſtantinople (l. iv. c. 59.).

with

CHAP. XX.

with tiles, perhaps of gilt braſs; and the walls, the columns, the pavement, were incruſted with variegated marbles. The moſt precious ornaments of gold and ſilver, of ſilk and gems, were profuſely dedicated to the ſervice of the altar; and this ſpecious magnificence was ſupported on the ſolid and perpetual baſis of landed property. In the ſpace of two centuries, from the reign of Conſtantine to that of Juſtinian, the eighteen hundred churches of the empire were enriched by the frequent and unalienable gifts of the prince and people. An annual income of ſix hundred pounds ſterling may be reaſonably aſſigned to the biſhops, who were placed at an equal diſtance between riches and poverty [105], but the ſtandard of their wealth inſenſibly roſe with the dignity and opulence of the cities which they governed. An authentic but imperfect [106] rent-roll ſpecifies ſome houſes, ſhops, gardens, and farms, which belonged to the three *Baſilicæ* of Rome, St. Peter, St. Paul, and St. John Lateran, in the provinces of Italy, Africa, and the Eaſt. They produce, beſides a reſerved rent of oil, linen, paper, aromatics, &c. a clear annual revenue of twenty-two thouſand pieces of gold, or twelve thouſand

[105] See Juſtinian. Novell. cxxiii. 3. The revenue of the patriarchs, and the moſt wealthy biſhops, is not expreſſed; the higheſt annual valuation of a biſhopric is ſtated at *thirty*, and the loweſt at *two*, pounds of gold; the medium might be taken at *ſixteen*, but theſe valuations are much below the real value.

[106] See Baronius (Annal. Eccleſ. A. D. 324. N° 58. 65. 70, 71.). Every record which comes from the Vatican is juſtly ſuſpected; yet theſe rent rolls have an ancient and authentic colour; and it is at leaſt evident, that, if forged, they were forged in a period when *farms*, not *kingdoms*, were the objects of papal avarice.

CHAP. XX.

pounds ſterling. In the age of Conſtantine and Juſtinian, the biſhops no longer poſſeſſed, perhaps they no longer deſerved, the unſuſpecting confidence of their clergy and people. The eccleſiaſtical revenues of each dioceſe were divided into four parts; for the reſpective uſes, of the biſhop himſelf, of his inferior clergy, of the poor, and of the public worſhip; and the abuſe of this ſacred truſt was ſtrictly and repeatedly checked [107]. The patrimony of the church was ſtill ſubject to all the public impoſitions of the ſtate [108]. The clergy of Rome, Alexandria, Theſſalonica, &c. might ſolicit and obtain ſome partial exemptions; but the premature attempt of the great council of Rimini, which aſpired to univerſal freedom, was ſucceſsfully reſiſted by the ſon of Conſtantine [109].

IV. The

[107] See Thomaſſin, Diſcipline de l'Egliſe, tom. iii. l. ii. c. 13, 14, 15. p. 689—706. The legal diviſion of the eccleſiaſtical revenue does not appear to have been eſtabliſhed in the time of Ambroſe and Chryſoſtom. Simplicius and Gelaſius, who were biſhops of Rome in the latter part of the fifth century, mention it in their paſtoral letters as a general law, which was already confirmed by the cuſtom of Italy.

[108] Ambroſe, the moſt ſtrenuous aſſerter of eccleſiaſtical privileges, ſubmits without a murmur to the payment of the land-tax. "Si "tributum petit Imperator, non negamus; agri eccleſiæ ſolvunt "tributum; ſolvimus quæ ſunt Cæſaris Cæſari, & quæ ſunt Dei "Deo: tributum Cæſaris eſt; non negatur." Baronius labours to interpret this tribute as an act of charity rather than of duty (Annal. Eccleſ. A. D. 387.); but the words, if not the intentions, of Ambroſe, are more candidly explained by Thomaſſin, Diſcipline de l'Egliſe, tom. iii. l. i. c. 34. p. 268.

[109] In Ariminenſe ſynodo ſuper eccleſiarum & clericorum privilegiis tractatû habito, uſque eo diſpoſitio progreſſa eſt, ut juga quæ viderentur ad eccleſiam pertinere, a publicâ functione ceſſarent inquietudine deſiſtente: quod noſtra videtur dudum ſanctio repulſiſſe Cod.

CHAP. XX.

IV. Civil jurisdiction.

IV. The Latin clergy, who erected their tribunal on the ruins of the civil and common law, have modestly accepted as the gift of Constantine [110], the independent jurisdiction, which was the fruit of time, of accident, and of their own industry. But the liberality of the Christian emperors had actually endowed them with some legal prerogatives, which secured and dignified the sacerdotal character [111]. 1. Under a despotic government, the bishops alone enjoyed and asserted the inestimable privilege of being tried only by their *peers*; and even in a capital accusation, a synod of their brethren were the sole judges of their guilt or innocence. Such a tri-

Cod. Theod. l. xvi. tit. ii. leg. 15. Had the synod of Rimini carried this point, such practical merit might have atoned for some speculative heresies.

[110] From Eusebius (in Vit. Constant. l. iv. c. 27.) and Sozomen (l. i. c. 9.) we are assured that the episcopal jurisdiction was extended and confirmed by Constantine; but the forgery of a famous edict, which was never fairly inserted in the Theodosian Code (see at the end, tom. vi. p. 303.), is demonstrated by Godefroy in the most satisfactory manner. It is strange that M. de Montesquieu, who was a lawyer as well as a philosopher, should allege this edict of Constantine (Esprit des Loix, l. xxx. c. 16.) without intimating any suspicion.

[111] The subject of ecclesiastical jurisdiction has been involved in a mist of passion, of prejudice, and of interest. Two of the fairest books which have fallen into my hands, are the Institutes of Canon Law, by the Abbé de Fleury, and the Civil History of Naples, by Giannone. Their moderation was the effect of situation as well as of temper. Fleury was a French ecclesiastic, who respected the authority of the parliaments; Giannone was an Italian lawyer, who dreaded the power of the church. And here let me observe, that as the general propositions which I advance are the result of *many* particular and imperfect facts, I must either refer the reader to those modern authors who have expressly treated the subject, or swell these notes to a disagreeable and disproportioned size.

CHAP. XX.

bunal, unleſs it was inflamed by perſonal reſentment or religious diſcord, might be favourable, or even partial, to the ſacerdotal order: but Conſtantine was ſatisfied [112], that ſecret impunity would be leſs pernicious than public ſcandal: and the Nicene council was edified by his public declaration, that if he ſurpriſed a biſhop in the act of adultery, he ſhould caſt his Imperial mantle over the epiſcopal ſinner. 2. The domeſtic juriſdiction of the biſhops was at once a privilege and a reſtraint of the eccleſiaſtical order, whoſe civil cauſes were decently withdrawn from the cognizance of a ſecular judge. Their venial offences were not expoſed to the ſhame of a public trial or puniſhment; and the gentle correction, which the tenderneſs of youth may endure from its parents or inſtructors, was inflicted by the temperate ſeverity of the biſhops. But if the clergy were guilty of any crime which could not be ſufficiently expiated by their degradation from an honourable and beneficial profeſſion, the Roman magiſtrate drew the ſword of juſtice, without any regard to eccleſiaſtical immunities. 3. The arbitration of the biſhops was ratified by a poſitive law; and the judges were inſtructed to execute, without appeal or delay, the epiſcopal decrees, whoſe validity had hitherto depended on the conſent of the parties. The converſion of the magiſtrates themſelves, and of the whole empire, might gradually remove the fears and ſcruples of the Chriſ-

[112] Tillemont has collected from Rufinus, Theodoret, &c. the ſentiments and language of Conſtantine. Mem. Eccleſ. tom. iii. p. 749, 750.

tians. But they ſtill reſorted to the tribunal of the biſhops, whoſe abilities and integrity they eſteemed; and the venerable Auſtin enjoyed the ſatisfaction of complaining that his ſpiritual functions were perpetually interrupted by the invidious labour of deciding the claim or the poſſeſſion of ſilver and gold, of lands and cattle. 4. The ancient privilege of ſanctuary was transferred to the Chriſtian temples, and extended, by the liberal piety of the younger Theodoſius, to the precincts of conſecrated ground [113]. The fugitive, and even guilty, ſuppliants, were permitted to implore, either the juſtice, or the mercy, of the Deity and his miniſters. The raſh violence of deſpotiſm was ſuſpended by the mild interpoſition of the church; and the lives or fortunes of the moſt eminent ſubjects might be protected by the mediation of the biſhop.

V. Spiritual cenſures.

V. The biſhop was the perpetual cenſor of the morals of his people. The diſcipline of penance was digeſted into a ſyſtem of canonical juriſprudence [114], which accurately defined the duty of private

[113] See Cod. Theod. l. ix. tit. xlv. leg. 4. In the works of Fra Paolo (tom. iv. p. 192, &c.) there is an excellent diſcourſe on the origin, claims, abuſes, and limits of ſanctuaries. He juſtly obſerves, that ancient Greece might perhaps contain fifteen or twenty *azyla* or ſanctuaries; a number which at preſent may be found in Italy within the walls of a ſingle city.

[114] The penitential juriſprudence was continually improved by the canons of the councils. But as many caſes were ſtill left to the diſcretion of the biſhops, they occaſionally publiſhed, after the example of the Roman Prætor, the rules of diſcipline which they propoſed to obſerve. Among the canonical epiſtles of the fourth century, thoſe of Baſil the Great were the moſt celebrated. They are inſerted in the Pandects of Beveridge (tom. ii. p. 47—151.), and

CHAP. XX.

private or public confeſſion, the rules of evidence, the degrees of guilt, and the meaſure of puniſhment. It was impoſſible to execute this ſpiritual cenſure, if the Chriſtian pontiff, who puniſhed the obſcure ſins of the multitude, reſpected the conſpicuous vices and deſtructive crimes of the magiſtrate: but it was impoſſible to arraign the conduct of the magiſtrate, without controuling the adminiſtration of civil government. Some conſiderations of religion, or loyalty, or fear, protected the ſacred perſons of the emperors from the zeal or reſentment of the biſhops; but they boldly cenſured and excommunicated the ſubordinate tyrants, who were not inveſted with the majeſty of the purple. St. Athanaſius excommunicated one of the miniſters of Egypt; and the interdict which he pronounced, of fire and water, was ſolemnly tranſmitted to the churches of Cappadocia [115]. Under the reign of the younger Theodoſius, the polite and eloquent Syneſius, one of the deſcendants of Hercules [116], filled the epiſcopal ſeat of Ptolemais,

and are tranſlated by Chardon. Hiſt. des Sacremens, tom. iv. p. 219—277.

[115] Baſil Epiſtol. xlvii. in Baronius (Annal. Eccleſ. A. D. 370. N° 91.), who declares that he purpoſely relates it, to convince governors that they were not exempt from a ſentence of excommunication. In his opinion, even a royal head is not ſafe from the thunders of the Vatican; and the cardinal ſhews himſelf much more conſiſtent than the lawyers and theologians of the Gallican church.

[116] The long ſeries of his anceſtors, as high as Euryſthenes, the firſt Doric king of Sparta, and the fifth in lineal deſcent from Hercules, was inſcribed in the public regiſters of Cyrene, a Lacedæmonian colony. (Syneſ. Epiſt. lvii. p. 197. edit. Petav.) Such a pure and illuſtrious pedigree of ſeventeen hundred years, without adding the royal anceſtors of Hercules, cannot be equalled in the hiſtory of mankind.

near

near the ruins of ancient Cyrene[118], and the philoſophic biſhop ſupported, with dignity, the character which he had aſſumed with reluctance[119]. He vanquiſhed the monſter of Libya, the preſident Andronicus, who abuſed the authority of a venal office, invented new modes of rapine and torture, and aggravated the guilt of oppreſſion and that of ſacrilege[120]. After a fruitleſs attempt to reclaim the haughty magiſtrate by mild and religious admonition, Syneſius proceeds to inflict the laſt ſentence of eccleſiaſtical juſtice[121], which

CHAP. XX.

[118] Syneſius (de Regno, p. 2.) pathetically deplores the fallen and ruined ſtate of Cyrene, πολις Ελληνις, παλαιον ονομα και σεμνον, και εν ωδη μυριφ των παλαι σοφων, νυν πενης και κατηφης, και μεγα ιχνιον. Ptolemais, a new city, 82 miles to the weſtward of Cyrene, aſſumed the Metropolitan honours of the Pentapolis, or Upper Libya, which were afterwards transferred to Suzuſa. See Weſſeling Itinerar. p. 67, 68. 732. Cellarius Geograph. tom. ii. part ii. p. 72. 74. Carolus a S^to Paulo Geograph. Sacra, p. 273. d'Anville Geographie ancienne, tom. iii. p. 43, 44. Memoires de l'Acad. des Inſcriptions, tom. xxxvii. p. 363—391.

[119] Syneſius had previouſly repreſented his own diſqualifications (Epiſt. c. v. p. 247—250.). He loved profane ſtudies and profane ſports; he was incapable of ſupporting a life of celibacy; he diſbelieved the reſurrection; and he refuſed to preach *fables* to the people, unleſs he might be permitted to *philoſophize* at home. Theophilus, primate of Egypt, who knew his merit, accepted this extraordinary compromiſe. See the life of Syneſius in Tillemont Mem. Eccleſ. tom. xii. p. 499—554.

[120] See the invective of Syneſius, Epiſt. lvii. p. 191—201. The promotion of Andronicus was illegal; ſince he was a native of Berenice, in the ſame province. The inſtruments of torture are curiouſly ſpecified, the στρεπτηριον, or preſs, the δακτυλοθηκα, the ωοδεσμευτηριον, the μολυβις, the σταγξ, and the χειλεξοφιοι, that variouſly preſſed or diſtended the fingers, the feet, the noſe, the ears, and the lips of the victims.

[121] The ſentence of excommunication is expreſſed in a rhetorical ſtyle. (Syneſius, Epiſt. lviii. p. 201—203.) The method of involving whole families, though ſomewhat unjuſt, was improved into national interdicts.

devotes

CHAP. XX.

devotes Andronicus, with his aſſociates and their *families*, to the abhorrence of earth and heaven. The impenitent ſinners, more cruel than Phalaris or Sennacherib, more deſtructive than war, peſtilence, or a cloud of locuſts, are deprived of the name and privileges of Chriſtians, of the participation of the ſacraments, and of the hope of Paradiſe. The biſhop exhorts the clergy, the magiſtrates, and the people, to renounce all ſociety with the enemies of Chriſt; to exclude them from their houſes and tables; and to refuſe them the common offices of life, and the decent rites of burial. The church of Ptolemais, obſcure and contemptible as ſhe may appear, addreſſes this declaration to all her ſiſter churches of the world; and the profane who reject her decrees, will be involved in the guilt and puniſhment of Andronicus and his impious followers. Theſe ſpiritual terrors were enforced by a dexterous application to the Byzantine court; the trembling preſident implored the mercy of the church; and the deſcendant of Hercules enjoyed the ſatisfaction of raiſing a proſtrate tyrant from the ground[122]. Such principles and ſuch examples inſenſibly prepared the triumph of the Roman pontiffs, who have trampled on the necks of kings.

VI. Freedom of public preaching.

VI. Every popular government has experienced the effects of rude or artificial eloquence. The coldeſt nature is animated, the firmeſt reaſon is moved, by the rapid communication of the prevailing impulſe;

[122] See Syneſius, Epiſt. xlvii. p. 186, 187. Epiſt. lxxii. p. 218, 219. Epiſt. lxxxix. p. 230—231.

and

CHAP. XX.

and each hearer is affected by his own paſſions, and by thoſe of the ſurrounding multitude. The ruin of civil liberty had ſilenced the demagogues of Athens, and the tribunes of Rome; the cuſtom of preaching, which ſeems to conſtitute a conſiderable part of Chriſtian devotion, had not been introduced into the temples of antiquity; and the ears of monarchs were never invaded by the harſh ſound of popular eloquence, till the pulpits of the empire were filled with ſacred orators, who poſſeſſed ſome advantages unknown to their profane predeceſſors [123]. The arguments and rhetoric of the tribune were inſtantly oppoſed, with equal arms, by ſkilful and reſolute antagoniſts; and the cauſe of truth and reaſon might derive an accidental ſupport from the conflict of hoſtile paſſions. The biſhop, or ſome diſtinguiſhed preſbyter, to whom he cautiouſly delegated the powers of preaching, harangued, without the danger of interruption or reply, a ſubmiſſive multitude, whoſe minds had been prepared and ſubdued by the awful ceremonies of religion. Such was the ſtrict ſubordination of the Catholic church, that the ſame concerted ſounds might iſſue at once from an hundred pulpits of Italy or Egypt, if they were *tuned* [124] by the maſter hand of the Roman or Alexandrian

[123] See Thomaſſin (Diſcipline de l'Egliſe, tom. ii. l. iii. c. 83. p. 1761—1770.) and Bingham (Antiquities, vol. i. l. xiv. c. 4. p. 688—717.). Preaching was conſidered as the moſt important office of the biſhop; but this function was ſometimes intruſted to ſuch preſbyters as Chryſoſtom and Auguſtin.

[124] Queen Elizabeth uſed this expreſſion, and practiſed this art, whenever ſhe wiſhed to prepoſſeſs the minds of her people in favour of any extraordinary meaſure of government. The hoſtile effects of this *muſic* were apprehended by her ſucceſſor, and ſeverely felt by his ſon.

CHAP. XX.

Alexandrian primate. The design of this institution was laudable, but the fruits were not always salutary. The preachers recommended the practice of the social duties; but they exalted the perfection of monastic virtue, which is painful to the individual, and useless to mankind. Their charitable exhortations betrayed a secret wish, that the clergy might be permitted to manage the wealth of the faithful, for the benefit of the poor. The most sublime representations of the attributes and laws of the Deity were sullied by an idle mixture of metaphysical subtleties, puerile rites, and fictitious miracles: and they expatiated, with the most fervent zeal, on the religious merit of hating the adversaries, and obeying the ministers, of the church. When the public peace was distracted by heresy and schism, the sacred orators sounded the trumpet of discord, and perhaps of sedition. The understandings of their congregations were perplexed by mystery, their passions were inflamed by invectives: and they rushed from the Christian temples of Antioch or Alexandria, prepared either to suffer or to inflict martyrdom. The corruption of taste and language is strongly marked in the vehement declamations of the Latin bishops; but the compositions of Gregory and Chrysostom have been compared with the most splendid models of Attic, or at least of Asiatic, eloquence [125].

son. "When pulpit, drum ecclesiastic," &c. See Heylin's Life of Archbishop Laud, p. 152.

[125] Those modest orators acknowledged, that, as they were destitute of the gift of miracles, they endeavoured to acquire the arts of eloquence.

VII. The

CHAP. XX.

VII. Privilege of legiſlative aſſemblies.

VII. The repreſentatives of the Chriſtian republic were regularly aſſembled in the ſpring and autumn of each year: and theſe ſynods diffuſed the ſpirit of eccleſiaſtical diſcipline and legiſlation through the hundred and twenty provinces of the Roman world [116]. The archbiſhop or metropolitan was empowered, by the laws, to ſummon the ſuffragan biſhops of his province; to reviſe their conduct, to vindicate their rights, to declare their faith, and to examine the merit of the candidates who were elected by the clergy and people to ſupply the vacancies of the epiſcopal college. The primates of Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, Carthage, and afterwards Conſtantinople, who exerciſed a more ample juriſdiction, convened the numerous aſſembly of their dependent biſhops. But the convocation of great and extraordinary ſynods, was the prerogative of the emperor alone. Whenever the emergencies of the church required this deciſive meaſure, he diſpatched a peremptory ſummons to the biſhops, or the deputies of each province, with an order for the uſe of poſt-horſes, and a competent allowance for the expences of their journey. At an early period, when Conſtantine was the protector, rather than the proſelyte, of Chriſtianity, he referred the African controverſy to the council of Arles; in which the biſhops of York, of Treves, of Milan, and of A. D. 314.

[116] The council of Nice, in the fourth, fifth, ſixth, and ſeventh, canons, has made ſome fundamental regulations concerning ſynods, metropolitans, and primates. The Nicene canons have been variouſly tortured, abuſed, interpolated, or forged, according to the intereſt of the clergy. The *Suburbicarian* churches, aſſigned (by Rufinus) to the biſhop of Rome, have been made the ſubject of vehement controverſy. See Sirmond. Opera, tom. iv. p. 1—238.

Carthage,

CHAP. XX.

A. D. 325.

Carthage, met as friends and brethren, to debate in their native tongue on the common intereſt of the Latin or Weſtern church [127]. Eleven years afterwards, a more numerous and celebrated aſſembly was convened at Nice in Bithynia, to extinguiſh, by their final ſentence, the ſubtle diſputes which had ariſen in Egypt on the ſubject of the Trinity. Three hundred and eighteen biſhops obeyed the ſummons of their indulgent maſter; the eccleſiaſtics of every rank, and ſect, and denomination, have been computed at two thouſand and forty-eight perſons [128]; the Greeks appeared in perſon; and the conſent of the Latins was expreſſed by the legates of the Roman pontiff. The ſeſſion, which laſted about two months, was frequently honoured by the preſence of the emperor. Leaving his guards at the door, he ſeated himſelf (with the permiſſion of the council) on a low ſtool in the midſt of the hall. Conſtantine liſtened with patience, and ſpoke with modeſty: and while he influenced the debates, he humbly profeſſed that he was the miniſter, not the judge, of the ſucceſſors of the apoſtles, who had been eſtabliſhed as prieſts and as gods upon earth [129]. Such profound reverence of an abſolute

[127] We have only thirty-three or forty-ſeven epiſcopal ſubſcriptions: but Ado, a writer indeed of ſmall account, reckons ſix hundred biſhops in the council of Arles. Tillemont Mem. Eccleſ. tom. vi. p. 422.

[128] See Tillemont, tom. vi. p. 915, and Beauſobre Hiſt. du Manicheiſme, tom. i. p. 529. The name of *biſhop*, which is given by Eutychius to the 2048 eccleſiaſtics (Annal. tom. i. p. 440. verſ. Pocock), muſt be extended far beyond the limits of an orthodox or even epiſcopal ordination.

[129] See Euſeb. in Vit. Conſtantin. l. iii. c. 6—21. Tillemont Mem. Eccleſiaſtiques, tom. vi. p. 669—759.

monarch

monarch towards a feeble and unarmed aſſembly of his own ſubjects, can only be compared to the reſpect with which the ſenate had been treated by the Roman princes who adopted the policy of Auguſtus. Within the ſpace of fifty years, a philoſophic ſpectator of the viciſſitudes of human affairs, might have contemplated Tacitus in the ſenate of Rome, and Conſtantine in the council of Nice. The fathers of the Capitol and thoſe of the church had alike degenerated from the virtues of their founders; but as the biſhops were more deeply rooted in the public opinion, they ſuſtained their dignity with more decent pride, and ſometimes oppoſed, with a manly ſpirit, the wiſhes of their ſovereign. The progreſs of time and ſuperſtition erazed the memory of the weakneſs, the paſſion, the ignorance, which diſgraced theſe eccleſiaſtical ſynods; and the Catholic world has unanimouſly ſubmitted [130] to the *infallible* decrees of the general councils [131].

[130] Sancimus igitur vicem legum obtinere, quæ a quatuor Sanctis Conciliis ... expoſitæ ſunt aut firmatæ. Prædictarum enim quatuor ſynodorum dogmata ſicut ſanctas Scripturas et regulas ſicut leges obſervamus. Juſtinian. Novell. cxxxi. Beveridge (ad Pandect. proleg. p. 2.) remarks, that the emperors never made new laws in eccleſiaſtical matters; and Giannone obſerves, in a very different ſpirit that they gave a legal ſanction to the canons of councils. Iſtoria Civile di Napoli, tom. i. p. 136.

[131] See the article CONCILE in the Encyclopedie, tom. iii. p. 668—679, edition de Lucques. The author, M. le docteur Bouchaud, has diſcuſſed, according to the principles of the Gallican church, the principal queſtions which relate to the form and conſtitution of general, national, and provincial councils. The editors (ſee Preface, p. xvi.) have reaſon to be proud of *this* article. Thoſe who conſult their immenſe compilation, ſeldom depart ſo well ſatisfied.

CHAP. XXI.

Perſecution of Hereſy.—The Schiſm of the Donatiſts.—The Arian Controverſy.—Athanaſius.—Diſtracted State of the Church and Empire under Conſtantine and his Sons.—Toleration of Paganiſm.

CHAP. XXI.

THE grateful applauſe of the clergy has conſecrated the memory of a prince who indulged their paſſions and promoted their intereſt. Conſtantine gave them ſecurity, wealth, honours, and revenge; and the ſupport of the orthodox faith was conſidered as the moſt ſacred and important duty of the civil magiſtrate. The edict of Milan, the great charter of toleration, had confirmed to each individual of the Roman world, the privilege of chuſing and profeſſing his own religion. But this ineſtimable privilege was ſoon violated: with the knowledge of truth, the emperor imbibed the maxims of perſecution; and the ſects which diſſented from the Catholic church, were afflicted and oppreſſed by the triumph of Chriſtianity. Conſtantine eaſily believed that the Heretics, who preſumed to diſpute *his* opinions, or to oppoſe *his* commands, were guilty of the moſt abſurd and criminal obſtinacy; and that a ſeaſonable application of moderate ſeverities might ſave thoſe unhappy men from the danger of an everlaſting condemnation. Not a moment was loſt in excluding the miniſters and teachers of the ſeparated congregations from any ſhare of the rewards and immunities which the emperor had

ſo

CHAP. XXI.

ſo liberally beſtowed on the orthodox clergy. But as the ſectaries might ſtill exiſt under the cloud of royal diſgrace, the conqueſt of the Eaſt was immediately followed by an edict which announced their total deſtruction [1]. After a preamble filled with paſſion and reproach, Conſtantine abſolutely prohibits the aſſemblies of the Heretics, and confiſcates their public property to the uſe either of the revenue or of the Catholic church. The ſects againſt whom the Imperial ſeverity was directed, appear to have been the adherents of Paul of Samoſata; the Montaniſts of Phrygia, who maintained an enthuſiaſtic ſucceſſion of prophecy; the Novatians, who ſternly rejected the temporal efficacy of repentance; the Marcionites and Valentinians, under whoſe leading banners the various Gnoſtics of Aſia and Egypt had inſenſibly rallied; and perhaps the Manichæans, who had recently imported from Perſia a more artful compoſition of Oriental and Chriſtian theology [2]. The deſign of extirpating the name, or at leaſt of reſtraining the progreſs, of theſe odious Heretics, was proſecuted with vigour and effect. Some of the penal regulations were copied from the edicts of Diocletian; and this method of converſion was applauded

[1] Euſebius in Vit. Conſtantin. l. iii. c. 63, 64, 65, 66.

[2] After ſome examination of the various opinions of Tillemont, Beauſobre, Lardner, &c. I am convinced that Manes did not propagate this ſect, even in Perſia, before the year 270. It is ſtrange, that a philoſophic and foreign hereſy ſhould have penetrated ſo rapidly into the African provinces; yet I cannot eaſily reject the edict of Diocletian againſt the Manichæans, which may be found in Baronius. (Annal. Eccl. A. D. 287.)

CHAP. XXI.

by the ſame biſhops who had felt the hand of oppreſſion, and had pleaded for the rights of humanity. Two immaterial circumſtances may ſerve, however, to prove that the mind of Conſtantine was not entirely corrupted by the ſpirit of zeal and bigotry. Before he condemned the Manichæans and their kindred ſects, he reſolved to make an accurate enquiry into the nature of their religious principles. As if he diſtruſted the impartiality of his eccleſiaſtical counſellors, this delicate commiſſion was entruſted to a civil magiſtrate; whoſe learning and moderation he juſtly eſteemed; and of whoſe venal character he was probably ignorant[3]. The emperor was ſoon convinced, that he had too haſtily proſcribed the orthodox faith and the exemplary morals of the Novatians, who had diſſented from the church in ſome articles of diſcipline which were not perhaps eſſential to ſalvation. By a particular edict, he exempted them from the general penalties of the law[4]; allowed them to build a church at Conſtantinople, reſpected the miracles of their ſaints, invited their biſhop Aceſius to the council of Nice; and gently ridiculed the narrow tenets of his ſect by a familiar jeſt; which, from the

[3] Conſtantinus, enim cum limatius ſuperſtitionum quæreret ſectas, Manichæorum et ſimilium, &c. Ammian. xv. 15. Strategius, who from this commiſſion obtained the ſurname of *Muſonianus*, was a Chriſtian of the Arian ſect. He acted as one of the counts at the council of Sardica. Libanius praiſes his mildneſs and prudence. Valeſ. ad locum Ammian.

[4] Cod. Theod. l. xvi. tit. v. leg. 2. As the general law is not inſerted in the Theodoſian code, it is probable, that in the year 438, the ſects which it had condemned were already extinct.

mouth

CHAP. XXI.

mouth of a ſovereign, muſt have been received with applauſe and gratitude [5].

African controverſy, A.D. 312.

The complaints and mutual accuſations which aſſailed the throne of Conſtantine, as ſoon as the death of Maxentius had ſubmitted Africa to his victorious arms, were ill adapted to edify an imperfect proſelyte. He learned with ſurpriſe, that the provinces of that great country from the confines of Cyrene to the columns of Hercules, were diſtracted with religious diſcord [6]. The ſource of the diviſion was derived from a double election in the church of Carthage; the ſecond, in rank and opulence, of the eccleſiaſtical thrones of the Weſt. Cæcilian and Majorinus were the two rival primates of Africa; and the death of the latter ſoon made room for Donatus, who by his ſuperior abilities and apparent virtues was the firmeſt ſupport of his party. The advantage which Cæcilian might claim from the priority of his ordination, was deſtroyed by the illegal, or at leaſt indecent, haſte, with which it had been performed, without expecting the arrival of the

5 Sozomen, l. i. c. 22. Socrates, l. i. c. 10. Theſe hiſtorians have been ſuſpected, but I think without reaſon, of an attachment to the Novatian doctrine. The emperor ſaid to the biſhop, "Aceſius, take a ladder, and get up to Heaven by yourſelf." Moſt of the Chriſtian ſects have, by turns, borrowed the ladder of Aceſius.

6 The beſt materials for this part of eccleſiaſtical hiſtory may be found in the edition of Optatus Milevitanus, publiſhed (Paris, 1700) by M. Dupin, who has enriched it with critical notes, geographical diſcuſſions, original records, and an accurate abridgment of the whole controverſy. M. de Tillemont has beſtowed on the Donatiſts the greateſt part of a volume (tom. vi. part i.): and I am indebted to him for an ample collection of all the paſſages of his favourite St. Auguſtin, which relate to thoſe heretics.

CHAP. XXI.

biſhops of Numidia. The authority of theſe biſhops, who, to the number of ſeventy, condemned Cæcilian, and conſecrated Majorinus, is again weakened by the infamy of ſome of their perſonal characters; and by the female intrigues, ſacrilegious bargains, and tumultuous proceedings which are imputed to this Numidian council [7]. The biſhops of the contending factions maintained, with equal ardour and obſtinacy, that their adverſaries were degraded, or at leaſt diſhonoured, by the odious crime of delivering the Holy Scriptures to the officers of Diocletian. From their mutual reproaches, as well as from the ſtory of this dark tranſaction, it may juſtly be inferred, that the late perſecution had embittered the zeal, without reforming the manners, of the African Chriſtians. That divided church was incapable of affording an impartial judicature; the controverſy was ſolemnly tried in five ſucceſſive tribunals, which were appointed by the emperor; and the whole proceeding, from the firſt appeal to the final ſentence, laſted above three years. A ſevere inquiſition, which was taken by the Prætorian vicar, and the proconſul of Africa, the report of two epiſcopal viſitors who had been ſent

7 Schiſma igitur illo tempore confuſæ mulieris iracundia peperit; ambitus nutrivit; avaritia roboravit. Optatus, l. i. c. 19. The language of Purpurius is that of a furious madman. Dicitur te neceſſe filios ſororis tuæ duos. Purpurius reſpondit: Futas me terreri? ... occidi; et occido eos qui contra me faciunt. Acta Concil. Cirtenſis, ad calc Optat. p. 274 When Cæcilian was invited to an aſſembly of biſhops, Purpurius ſaid to his brethren, or rather to his accomplices, "Let him come hither to receive our impoſition of "hands; and we will break his head by way of penance." Optat. l. i. c. 19.

CHAP. XXI.

to Carthage, the decrees of the councils of Rome and of Arles, and the ſupreme judgment of Conſtantine himſelf in his ſacred conſiſtory, were all favourable to the cauſe of Cæcilian; and he was unanimouſly acknowledged by the civil and eccleſiaſtical powers, as the true and lawful primate of Africa. The honours and eſtates of the church were attributed to *his* ſuffragan biſhops, and it was not without difficulty, that Conſtantine was ſatisfied with inflicting the puniſhment of exile on the principal leaders of the Donatiſt faction. As their cauſe was examined with attention, perhaps it was determined with juſtice. Perhaps their complaint was not without foundation, that the credulity of the emperor had been abuſed by the inſidious arts of his favourite Oſius. The influence of falſehood and corruption might procure the condemnation of the innocent, or aggravate the ſentence of the guilty. Such an act, however, of injuſtice, if it concluded an importunate diſpute, might be numbered among the tranſient evils of a deſpotic adminiſtration, which are neither felt nor remembered by poſterity.

Schiſm of the Donatiſts, A.D. 315.

But this incident, ſo inconſiderable that it ſcarcely deſerves a place in hiſtory, was productive of a memorable ſchiſm, which afflicted the provinces of Africa above three hundred years, and was extinguiſhed only with Chriſtianity itſelf. The inflexible zeal of freedom and fanaticiſm animated the Donatiſts to refuſe obedience to the uſurpers, whoſe election they diſputed, and whoſe ſpiritual powers they denied. Excluded from the civil and religious communion of mankind,

CHAP. XXI.

they boldly excommunicated the reſt of mankind, who had embraced the impious party of Cæcilian, and of the Traditors, from whom he derived his pretended ordination. They aſſerted with confidence, and almoſt with exultation, that the Apoſtolical ſucceſſion was interrupted; that *all* the biſhops of Europe and Aſia were infected by the contagion of guilt and ſchiſm; and that the prerogatives of the Catholic church were confined to the choſen portion of the African believers, who alone had preſerved inviolate the integrity of their faith and diſcipline. This rigid theory was ſupported by the moſt uncharitable conduct. Whenever they acquired a proſelyte, even from the diſtant provinces of the Eaſt, they carefully repeated the ſacred rites of baptiſm[8] and ordination; as they rejected the validity of thoſe which he had already received from the hands of heretics or ſchiſmatics. Biſhops, virgins, and even ſpotleſs infants, were ſubjected to the diſgrace of a public penance, before they could be admitted to the communion of the Donatiſts. If they obtained poſſeſſion of a church which had been uſed by their Catholic adverſaries, they purified the unhallowed building with the ſame jealous care which a temple of Idols might have required. They waſhed the pavement, ſcraped the walls,

[8] The councils of Arles, of Nice, and of Trent, confirmed the wiſe and moderate practice of the church of Rome. The Donatiſts, however, had the advantage of maintaining the ſentiment of Cyprian, and of a conſiderable part of the primitive church. Vincentius Lirinenſis (p. 332. ap. Tillemont, Mem. Eccleſ. tom. vi. p. 138.) has explained why the Donatiſts are eternally burning with the Devil, while St. Cyprian reigns in heaven with Jeſus Chriſt.

burnt

CHAP. XXI.

burnt the altar, which was commonly of wood, melted the conſecrated plate, and caſt the Holy Euchariſt to the dogs, with every circumſtance of ignominy which could provoke and perpetuate the animoſity of religious factions[9]. Notwithſtanding this irreconcileable averſion, the two parties, who were mixed and ſeparated in all the cities of Africa, had the ſame language and manners, the ſame zeal and learning, the ſame faith and worſhip. Proſcribed by the civil and eccleſiaſtical powers of the empire, the Donatiſts ſtill maintained in ſome provinces, particularly in Numidia, their ſuperior numbers; and four hundred biſhops acknowledged the juriſdiction of their primate. But the invincible ſpirit of the ſect ſometimes preyed on its own vitals; and the boſom of their ſchiſmatical church was torn by inteſtine diviſions. A fourth part of the Donatiſt biſhops followed the independent ſtandard of the Maximianiſts. The narrow and ſolitary path which their firſt leaders had marked out, continued to deviate from the great ſociety of mankind. Even the imperceptible ſect of the Rogatians could affirm, without a bluſh, that when Chriſt ſhould deſcend to judge the earth, he would find his true religion preſerved only in a few nameleſs villages of the Cæſarean Mauritania[10].

[9] See the ſixth book of Optatus Milevitanus, p. 91—100.

[10] Tillemont, Mem. Eccleſiaſtiques, tom. vi. part i. p. 253. He laughs at their partial credulity. He revered Auguſtin, the great doctor of the ſyſtem of predeſtination.

The

CHAP. XXI.

The Trinitarian controverſy.

The ſchiſm of the Donatiſts was confined to Africa: the more diffuſive miſchief of the Trinitarian controverſy ſucceſſively penetrated into every part of the Chriſtian world. The former was an accidental quarrel, occaſioned by the abuſe of freedom; the latter was a high and myſterious argument, derived from the abuſe of philoſophy. From the age of Conſtantine to that of Clovis and Theodoric, the temporal intereſts both of the Romans and Barbarians were deeply involved in the theological diſputes of Arianiſm. The hiſtorian may therefore be permitted reſpectfully to withdraw the veil of the ſanctuary; and to deduce the progreſs of reaſon and faith, of error and paſſion, from the ſchool of Plato to the decline and fall of the empire.

The ſyſtem of Plato. Before Chriſt 360.

The genius of Plato, informed by his own meditation, or by the traditional knowledge of the prieſts of Egypt[11], had ventured to explore the myſterious nature of the Deity. When he had elevated his mind to the ſublime contemplation of the firſt ſelf-exiſtent, neceſſary cauſe of the univerſe, the Athenian ſage was incapable of conceiving *how* the ſimple unity of his eſſence could

[11] Plato Egyptum peragravit ut a ſacerdotibus Barbaris numeros et *cœleſtia* acciperet. Cicero de Finibus, v. 25. The Egyptians might ſtill preſerve the traditional creed of the Patriarchs. Joſephus has perſuaded many of the Chriſtian fathers, that Plato derived a part of his knowledge from the Jews; but this vain opinion cannot be reconciled with the obſcure ſtate and unſocial manners of the Jewiſh people, whoſe ſcriptures were not acceſſible to Greek curioſity till more than one hundred years after the death of Plato. See Marſham, Canon. Chron. p. 144. Le Clerc, Epiſtol. Critic. vii. p. 177—194.

admit

admit the infinite variety of distinct and successive ideas which compose the model of the intellectual world; *how* a Being purely incorporeal could execute that perfect model, and mould with a plastic hand the rude and independent chaos. The vain hope of extricating himself from these difficulties, which must ever oppress the feeble powers of the human mind, might induce Plato to consider the divine nature under the threefold modification; of the first cause, the reason or *Logos*, and the soul or spirit of the universe. His poetical imagination sometimes fixed and animated these metaphysical abstractions; the three *archical* or original principles were represented in the Platonic system as three Gods, united with each other by a mysterious and ineffable generation; and the Logos was particularly considered under the more accessible character of the Son of an Eternal Father, and the Creator and Governor of the world. Such appear to have been the secret doctrines which were cautiously whispered in the gardens of the academy; and which, according to the more recent disciples of Plato, could not be perfectly understood, till after an assiduous study of thirty years [12].

CHAP. XXI.

The Logos

The arms of the Macedonians diffused over Asia and Egypt the language and learning of

taught in the school of Alexandria. Before Christ 300.

[12] The modern guides who lead me to the knowledge of the Platonic system are, Cudworth (Intellectual System, p. 568—620.), Basnage (Hist. des Juifs, l. iv. c. iv. p. 53—86.), Le Clerc (Epist. Crit. vii. p. 194.—209.), and Brucker (Hist. Philosoph. tom. i. p. 675.—706.). As the learning of these writers was equal, and their intention different, an inquisitive observer may derive instruction from their disputes, and certainty from their agreement.

Greece;

CHAP. XXI.

Greece; and the theological ſyſtem of Plato was taught with leſs reſerve, and perhaps with ſome improvements, in the celebrated ſchool of Alexandria [13]. A numerous colony of Jews had been invited, by the favour of the Ptolemies, to ſettle in their new capital [14]. While the bulk of the nation practiſed the legal ceremonies, and purſued the lucrative occupations of commerce, a few Hebrews, of a more liberal ſpirit, devoted their lives to religious and philoſophical contemplation [15]. They cultivated with diligence, and embraced with ardour, the theological ſyſtem of the Athenian ſage. But their national pride would have been mortified by a fair confeſſion of their former poverty: and they boldly marked, as the ſacred inheritance of their anceſtors, the gold and jewels which they had ſo lately ſtolen from their Egyptian maſters. One hundred years before the birth of Chriſt, a philoſophical treatiſe, which manifeſtly betrays the ſtyle and ſentiments of the ſchool of Plato, was produced by the Alexandrian Jews, and unanimouſly received as a genuine and valuable relic of the inſpired Wiſdom of Solomon [16]. A ſimilar union of the Moſaic faith, and the

Before Chriſt 100.

[13] Brucker, Hiſt. Philoſoph. tom. i. p. 1349—1357. The Alexandrian ſchool is celebrated by Strabo (l. xvii.) and Ammianus (xxii. 6.).

[14] Joſeph. Antiquitat. l. xii. c. 1. 3. Baſnage, Hiſt. des Juifs, l. vii. c. 7.

[15] For the origin of the Jewiſh philoſophy, ſee Euſebius, Præparat. Evangel. viii. 9, 10. According to Philo, the Therapeutæ ſtudied philoſophy; and Brucker has proved (Hiſt. Philoſoph. tom. ii. p. 787.), that they gave the preference to that of Plato.

[16] See Calmet, Diſſertations ſur la Bible, tom. ii. p. 277. The book of the Wiſdom of Solomon was received by many of the fathers as

CHAP. XXI.

the Grecian philoſophy, diſtinguiſhes the works of Philo, which were compoſed, for the moſt part, under the reign of Auguſtus[17]. The material ſoul of the univerſe[18] might offend the piety of the Hebrews: but they applied the character of the Logos to the Jehovah of Moſes and the patriarchs; and the Son of God was introduced upon earth under a viſible, and even human appearance, to perform thoſe familiar offices which ſeem incompatible with the nature and attributes of the Univerſal Cauſe[19].

Revealed by the Apoſtle St. John, A. D. 97.

The eloquence of Plato, the name of Solomon, the authority of the ſchool of Alexandria, and the

as the work of that monarch; and although rejected by the Proteſtants for want of a Hebrew original, it has obtained, with the reſt of the Vulgate, the ſanction of the council of Trent.

[17] The Platoniſm of Philo, which was famous to a proverb, is proved beyond a doubt by Le Clerc (Epiſt. Crit. viii. p. 211.—228.). Baſnage (Hiſt. des Juifs, l. iv. c. 5.) has clearly aſcertained, that the theological works of Philo were compoſed before the death, and moſt probably before the birth of Chriſt. In ſuch a time of darkneſs, the knowledge of Philo is more aſtoniſhing than his errors. Bull, Defenſ. Fid. Nicen. ſ. i. c. i. p. 12.

[18] Mens agitat molem, et magno ſe corpori *miſcet*. Beſides this material ſoul, Cudworth has diſcovered (p. 562.) in Amelius, Porphyry, Plotinus, and, as he thinks, in Plato himſelf, a ſuperior, ſpiritual, *upercoſmian* ſoul of the univerſe. But this double ſoul is exploded by Brucker, Baſnage, and Le Clerc, as an idle fancy of the latter Platoniſts.

[19] Petav. Dogmata Theologica, tom. ii. l. viii. c. 2. p. 791. Bull, Defenſ. Fid. Nicen. ſ. i. c. 1. p 8. 13. This notion, till it was abuſed by the Arians, was freely adopted in the Chriſtian theology. Tertullian (adv. Praxeam, c. 16.) has a remarkable and dangerous paſſage. After contraſting, with indiſcreet wit, the nature of God, and the actions of Jehovah, he concludes: Scilicet ut hæc de filio Dei non credenda fuiſſe, ſi non ſcripta eſſent; fortaſſe non credenda de Patre licet ſcripta.

CHAP. XXI.

consent of the Jews and Greeks, were insufficient to establish the truth of a mysterious doctrine, which might please, but could not satisfy, a rational mind. A prophet, or apostle, inspired by the Deity, can alone exercise a lawful dominion over the faith of mankind; and the theology of Plato might have been for ever confounded with the philosophical visions of the Academy, the Porch, and the Lycæum, if the name and divine attributes of the *Logos* had not been confirmed by the celestial pen of the last and most sublime of the Evangelists [20]. The Christian Revelation, which was consummated under the reign of Nerva, disclosed to the world the amazing secret, that the Logos, who was with God from the beginning, and was God, who had made all things, and for whom all things had been made, was incarnate in the person of Jesus of Nazareth; who had been born of a virgin, and suffered death on the cross. Besides the general design of fixing on a perpetual basis the divine honours of Christ, the most ancient and respectable of the ecclesiastical writers have ascribed to the evangelic theologian, a particular intention to confute two opposite heresies, which disturbed the peace of the primitive church [21].

[20] The Platonists admired the beginning of the Gospel of St. John, as containing an exact transcript of their own principles. Augustin. de Civitat. Dei, x. 29. Amelius apud Cyril. adverf. Julian. l. viii. p. 283. But in the third and fourth centuries, the Platonists of Alexandria might improve their Trinity, by the secret study of the Christian theology.

[21] See Beausobre, Hist Critique du Manicheisme, tom. i. p. 377. The Gospel according to St. John is supposed to have been published about seventy years after the death of Christ.

CHAP. XXI.

The Ebionites and Docetes.

I. The faith of the Ebionites[22], perhaps of the Nazarenes[23], was groſs and imperfect. They revered Jeſus as the greateſt of the prophets, endowed with ſupernatural virtue and power. They aſcribed to his perſon and to his future reign all the predictions of the Hebrew oracles which relate to the ſpiritual and everlaſting kingdom of the promiſed Meſſiah[24]. Some of them might confeſs that he was born of a virgin; but they obſtinately rejected the preceding exiſtence and divine perfections of the *Logos*, or Son of God, which are ſo clearly defined in the Goſpel of St. John. About fifty years afterwards, the Ebionites, whoſe errors are mentioned by Juſtin Martyr, with leſs ſeverity than they ſeem to deſerve[25], formed a very inconſiderable portion of the Chriſtian name. II. The Gnoſtics, who were diſtinguiſhed by the epithet of *Docetes*, deviated into the contrary extreme; and betrayed the human, while they

[22] The ſentiments of the Ebionites are fairly ſtated by Moſheim (p. 331.) and Le Clerc (Hiſt. Eccleſ. p. 515.). The Clementines, publiſhed among the apoſtolical Fathers, are attributed by the critics to one of theſe ſectaries.

[23] Staunch polemics, like Bull (Judicium Eccleſ. Cathol. c. 2.), inſiſt on the orthodoxy of the Nazarenes; which appears leſs pure and certain in the eyes of Moſheim (p. 330.).

[24] The humble condition and ſufferings of Jeſus have always been a ſtumbling block to the Jews. "Deus . . . contrariis colori-"bus Meſſiam depinxerat; futurus erat Rex, Judex, Paſtor," &c. See Limborch et Orobio Amica Collat. p. 8. 19. 53—76. 192—234. But this objection has obliged the believing Chriſtians to lift up their eyes to a ſpiritual and everlaſting kingdom.

[25] Juſtin. Martyr. Dialog. cum Tryphonte, p. 143, 144. See Le Clerc, Hiſt. Eccleſ. p. 615. Bull, and his editor Grabe (Judicium Eccleſ. Cathol. c. 7. and Appendix), attempt to diſtort either the ſentiments or the words of Juſtin; but their violent correction of the text is rejected even by the Benedictine editors.

aſſerted

CHAP. XXI.

aſſerted the divine, nature of Chriſt. Educated in the ſchool of Plato, accuſtomed to the ſublime idea of the *Logos*, they readily conceived that the brighteſt *Æon*, or *Emanation* of the Deity, might aſſume the outward ſhape and viſible appearances of a mortal [25]; but they vainly pretended that the imperfections of matter are incompatible with the purity of a celeſtial ſubſtance. While the blood of Chriſt yet ſmoked on Mount Calvary, the Docetes invented the impious and extravagant hypotheſis, that, inſtead of iſſuing from the womb of the Virgin [27], he had deſcended on the banks of the Jordan in the form of perfect manhood; that he had impoſed on the ſenſes of his enemies, and of his diſciples; and that the miniſters of Pilate had waſted their impotent rage on an airy phantom, who *ſeemed* to expire on the croſs, and, after three days, to riſe from the dead [28].

Myſterious nature of the Trinity.

The divine ſanction, which the Apoſtle had beſtowed on the fundamental principle of the

[25] The Arians reproached the orthodox party with borrowing their Trinity from the Valentinians and Marcionites. See Beauſobre, Hiſt. du Manicheiſme, l. iii. c. 5. 7.

[27] Non dignum eſt ex utero credere Deum, et Deum Chriſtum .... non dignum eſt ut tanta majeſtas per ſordes et ſqualores mulieris tranſire credatur. The Gnoſtics aſſerted the impurity of matter, and of marriage; and they were ſcandalized by the groſs interpretations of the fathers, and even of Auguſtin himſelf. See Beauſobre, tom. ii. p. 523.

[28] Apoſtolis adhuc in ſæculo ſuperſtitibus apud Judæum Chriſti ſanguine recente, et *phantaſma* corpus Domini aſſerebatur. Cotelerius thinks (Patres Apoſtol. tom. ii. p. 24.) that thoſe who will not allow the *Docetes* to have ariſen in the time of the Apoſtles, may with equal reaſon deny that the ſun ſhines at noon-day. Theſe *Docetæ*, who formed the moſt conſiderable party among the Gnoſtics, were ſo called, becauſe they granted only a *ſeeming* body to Chriſt.

theology

theology of Plato, encouraged the learned proſelytes of the ſecond and third centuries to admire and ſtudy the writings of the Athenian ſage, who had thus marvellouſly anticipated one of the moſt ſurpriſing diſcoveries of the Chriſtian revelation. The reſpectable name of Plato was uſed by the orthodox [29], and abuſed by the heretics [30], as the common ſupport of truth and error: the authority of his ſkilful commentators, and the ſcience of dialects, were employed to juſtify the remote conſequences of his opinions; and to ſupply the diſcreet ſilence of the inſpired writers. The ſame ſubtle and profound queſtions concerning the nature, the generation, the diſtinction, and the equality of the three divine perſons of the myſterious *Triad*, or Trinity [31], were agitated in the philoſophical, and in the Chriſtian ſchools, of Alexandria. An eager ſpirit of curioſity urged

[29] Some proofs of the reſpect which the Chriſtians entertained for the perſon and doctrine of Plato, may be found in De la Mothe le Vayer, tom. v. p. 135, &c. edit. 1757; and Baſnage, Hiſt. des Juifs, tom. iv. p. 29. 79, &c.

[30] Doleo bona fide, Platonem omnium hæreticorum condimentarium factum. Tertullian. de Anima, c. 23. Petavius (Dogm. Theolog. tom. iii. proleg. 2.) ſhews that this was a general complaint. Beauſobre (tom. i. l. iii. c. 9, 10.) has deduced the Gnoſtic errors from Platonic principles; and as, in the ſchool of Alexandria, thoſe principles were blended with the Oriental philoſophy (Brucker, tom. i. p. 1356.), the ſentiment of Beauſobre may be reconciled with the opinion of Moſheim (General Hiſtory of the Church, vol. i. p. 37.).

[31] If Theophilus, biſhop of Antioch (ſee Dupin, Bibliotheque Eccleſiaſtique, tom. i. p. 66.), was the firſt who employed the word *Triad*, *Trinity*, that abſtract term, which was already familiar to the ſchools of philoſophy, muſt have been introduced into the theology of the Chriſtians after the middle of the ſecond century.

CHAP. XXI.

them to explore the ſecrets of the abyſs; and the pride of the profeſſors, and of their diſciples, was ſatisfied with the ſcience of words. But the moſt ſagacious of the Chriſtian theologians, the great Athanaſius himſelf, has candidly confeſſed [32], that whenever he forced his underſtanding to meditate on the divinity of the *Logos*, his toilſome and unavailing efforts recoiled on themſelves; that the more he thought, the leſs he comprehended; and the more he wrote, the leſs capable was he of expreſſing his thoughts. In every ſtep of the enquiry, we are compelled to feel and acknowledge the immeaſurable diſproportion between the ſize of the object and the capacity of the human mind. We may ſtrive to abſtract the notions of time, of ſpace, and of matter, which ſo cloſely adhere to all the perceptions of our experimental knowledge. But as ſoon as we preſume to reaſon of infinite ſubſtance, of ſpiritual generation; as often as we deduce any poſitive concluſions from a negative idea, we are involved in darkneſs, perplexity, and inevitable contradiction. As theſe difficulties ariſe from the nature of the ſubject, they oppreſs, with the ſame inſuperable weight, the philoſophic and the theological diſputant; but we may obſerve two eſſential and peculiar circumſtances, which diſcriminated the doctrines of the Catholic church from the opinions of the Platonic ſchool.

Zeal of the Chriſtians.

I. A choſen ſociety of philoſophers, men of a liberal education and curious diſpoſition, might

[32] Athanaſius, tom. i. p. 808. His expreſſions have an uncommon energy; and as he was writing to Monks, there could not be any occaſion for him to *affect* a rational language.

ſilently

CHAP. XXI.

ſilently meditate, and temperately diſcuſs, in the gardens of Athens or the library of Alexandria, the abſtruſe queſtions of metaphyſical ſcience. The lofty ſpeculations, which neither convinced the underſtanding, nor agitated the paſſions, of the Platoniſts themſelves, were careleſsly overlooked by the idle, the buſy, and even the ſtudious part of mankind [33]. But after the *Logos* had been revealed as the ſacred object of the faith, the hope, and the religious worſhip of the Chriſtians; the myſterious ſyſtem was embraced by a numerous and increaſing multitude in every province of the Roman world. Thoſe perſons who, from their age, or ſex, or occupations, were the leaſt qualified to judge, who were the leaſt exerciſed in the habits of abſtract reaſoning; aſpired to contemplate the œconomy of the Divine Nature: and it is the boaſt of Tertullian [34], that a Chriſtian mechanic could readily anſwer ſuch queſtions as had perplexed the wiſeſt of the Grecian ſages. Where the ſubject lies ſo far beyond our reach, the difference between the higheſt and the loweſt of human underſtandings may indeed be calculated as infinitely ſmall; yet the degree of weakneſs may perhaps be meaſured by the degree of obſtinacy and dogmatic confidence. Theſe ſpecula-

[33] In a treatiſe, which profeſſed to explain the opinions of the ancient philoſophers concerning the nature of the gods, we might expect to diſcover the theological Trinity of Plato. But Cicero very honeſtly confeſſed, that though he had tranſlated the Timæus, he could never underſtand that myſterious dialogue. See Hieronym. præf. ad l xii in Iſaiam, tom. v. p. 154.

[34] Tertullian. in Apolog c. 46. See Bayle, Dictionnaire, au mot *Simonide*. His remarks on the preſumption of Tertullian are profound and intereſting.

CHAP. XXI.

tions, instead of being treated as the amusement of a vacant hour, became the most serious business of the present, and the most useful preparation for a future, life. A theology, which it was incumbent to believe, which it was impious to doubt, and which it might be dangerous, and even fatal, to mistake, became the familiar topic of private meditation and popular discourse. The cold indifference of philosophy was inflamed by the fervent spirit of devotion; and even the metaphors of common language suggested the fallacious prejudices of sense and experience. The Christians, who abhorred the gross and impure generation of the Greek mythology[35], were tempted to argue from the familiar analogy of the filial and paternal relations. The character of *Son* seemed to imply a perpetual subordination to the voluntary author of his existence[36]; but as the act of generation, in the most spiritual and abstracted sense, must be supposed to transmit the properties of a common nature[37], they durst not presume to circumscribe

[35] Lactantius, iv. 8. Yet the *Probole*, or *Prolatio*, which the most orthodox divines borrowed without scruple from the Valentinians, and illustrated by the comparisons of a fountain and stream, the sun and its rays, &c. either meant nothing, or favoured a material idea of the divine generation. See Beausobre, tom. i. l. iii. c. 7. p. 548.

[36] Many of the primitive writers have frankly confessed, that the Son owed his being to the *will* of the Father. See Clarke's Scripture Trinity, p. 280—287. On the other hand, Athanasius and his followers seem unwilling to grant what they are afraid to deny. The schoolmen extricate themselves from this difficulty by the distinction of a *preceding* and a *concomitant* will. Petav. Dogm. Theolog. tom. ii. l. vi. c. 8. p. 587—603.

[37] See Petav. Dogm. Theolog. tom. ii. l. ii. c. 10. p. 139.

the

CHAP. XXI.

the powers or the duration of the Son of an eternal and omnipotent Father. Fourſcore years after the death of Chriſt, the Chriſtians of Bithynia declared before the tribunal of Pliny, that they invoked him as a god; and his divine honors have been perpetuated in every age and country, by the various ſects who aſſume the name of his diſciples [38]. Their tender reverence for the memory of Chriſt, and their horror for the profane worſhip of any created being, would have engaged them to aſſert the equal and abſolute divinity of the *Logos*, if their rapid aſcent towards the throne of heaven had not been imperceptibly checked by the apprehenſion of violating the unity and ſole ſupremacy of the great Father of Chriſt and of the Univerſe. The ſuſpenſe and fluctuation produced in the minds of the Chriſtians by theſe oppoſite tendencies, may be obſerved in the writings of the theologians who flouriſhed after the end of the apoſtolic age, and before the origin of the Arian controverſy. Their ſuffrage is claimed, with equal confidence, by the orthodox and by the heretical parties; and the moſt inquiſitive critics have fairly allowed, that if they had the good fortune of poſſeſſing the Catholic verity, they have delivered their conceptions in looſe,

[38] Carmenque Chriſto quaſi Deo dicere ſecum invicem. Plin. Epiſt. x. 97. The ſenſe of *Deus*, Θεος, *Elohim*, in the ancient languages, is critically examined by Le Clerc (Ars Critica, p. 150—156.), and the propriety of worſhipping a very excellent creature, is ably defended by the Socinian Emlyn (Tracts, p. 29—36. 51—145.).

CHAP. XXI.

inaccurate, and ſometimes contradictory language [39].

Authority of the church.

II. The devotion of individuals was the firſt circumſtance which diſtinguiſhed the Chriſtians from the Platoniſts; the ſecond was the authority of the church. The diſciples of philoſophy aſſerted the rights of intellectual freedom, and their reſpect for the ſentiments of their teachers was a liberal and voluntary tribute, which they offered to ſuperior reaſon. But the Chriſtians formed a numerous and diſciplined ſociety; and the juriſdiction of their laws and magiſtrates was ſtrictly exerciſed over the minds of the faithful. The looſe wanderings of the imagination were gradually confined by creeds and confeſſions [40]; the freedom of private judgment ſubmitted to the public wiſdom of ſynods; the authority of a theologian was determined by his eccleſiaſtical rank; and the epiſcopal ſucceſſors of the apoſtles inflicted the cenſures of the church on thoſe who deviated from the orthodox belief. But in an age of religious controverſy, every act of oppreſſion adds new force to the elaſtic vigour of the mind; and the zeal or obſtinacy of a ſpiritual rebel was ſometimes ſtimulated by ſecret motives of ambition or

[39] See Daillé de Uſu Patrum, and Le Clerc, Bibliotheque Univerſelle, tom. x. p. 409. To arraign the faith of the Anti-Nicene fathers, was the object, or at leaſt has been the effect, of the ſtupendous work of Petavius on the Trinity (Dogm. Theolog. tom ii.); nor has the deep impreſſion been erazed by the learned defence of Biſhop Bull.

[40] The moſt ancient creeds were drawn up with the greateſt latitude. See Bull (Judicium Eccleſ. Cathol.), who tries to prevent Epiſcopus from deriving any advantage from this obſervation.

avarice,

avarice. A metaphyſical argument became the cauſe or pretence of political conteſts; the ſubtleties of the Platonic ſchool were uſed as the badges of popular factions, and the diſtance which ſeparated their reſpective tenets was enlarged or magnified by the acrimony of diſpute. As long as the dark hereſies of Praxeas and Sabellius laboured to confound the *Father* with the *Son* [41], the orthodox party might be excuſed if they adhered more ſtrictly and more earneſtly to the *diſtinction*, than to the *equality*, of the divine perſons. But as ſoon as the heat of controverſy had ſubſided, and the progreſs of the Sabellians was no longer an object of terror to the churches of Rome, of Africa, or of Egypt; the tide of theological opinion began to flow with a gentle but ſteady motion toward the contrary extreme; and the moſt orthodox doctors allowed themſelves the uſe of the terms and definitions which had been cenſured in the mouth of the ſectaries [42]. After the edict of toleration had reſtored peace and leiſure to the Chriſtians, the Trinitarian controverſy was revived in the ancient ſeat of Platoniſm, the learned, the opulent, the tumultuous city of Alexandria; and the flame of religious diſcord was rapidly communicated from the ſchools to the clergy, the people, the pro-

Factions.

[41] The hereſies of Praxeas, Sabellius, &c. are accurately explained by Moſheim (p. 425. 680—714.). Praxeas, who came to Rome about the end of the ſecond century, deceived, for ſome time, the ſimplicity of the biſhop, and was confuted by the pen of the angry Tertullian.

[42] Socrates acknowledges, that the hereſy of Arius proceeded from his ſtrong deſire to embrace an opinion the moſt diametrically oppoſite to that of Sabellius.

CHAP. XXI.

vince, and the East. The abstruse question of the eternity of the *Logos* was agitated in ecclesiastical conferences, and popular sermons; and the heterodox opinions of Arius[43] were soon made public by his own zeal, and by that of his adversaries. His most implacable adversaries have acknowledged the learning and blameless life of that eminent presbyter, who, in a former election, had declared, and perhaps generously declined, his pretensions to the episcopal throne[44]. His competitor Alexander assumed the office of his judge. The important cause was argued before him; and if at first he seemed to hesitate, he at length pronounced his final sentence, as an absolute rule of faith[45]. The undaunted presbyter, who presumed to resist the authority of his angry bishop, was separated from the communion of the church. But the pride of Arius was supported by the applause of a numerous party. He reckoned among his immediate followers two bishops of

Arius.

[43] The figure and manners of Arius, the character and numbers of his first proselytes, are painted in very lively colours by Epiphanius (tom. i. Hæres. lxix. 3. p. 729.); and we cannot but regret that he should soon forget the historian, to assume the task of controversy.

[44] See Philostorgius (l. i. c. 3.) and Godefroy's ample Commentary. Yet the credibility of Philostorgius is lessened, in the eyes of the orthodox, by his Arianism; and in those of rational critics, by his passion, his prejudice, and his ignorance.

[45] Sozomen (l. i. c. 15.) represents Alexander as indifferent, and even ignorant, in the beginning of the controversy; while Socrates (l. i. c. 5.) ascribes the origin of the dispute to the vain curiosity of his theological speculations. Dr. Jortin (Remarks on Ecclesiastical History, vol. ii. p. 178.) has censured, with his usual freedom, the conduct of Alexander: ὁρῶ . . . . θρόνου φροντὶς ἐκίνυσε.

Egypt,

CHAP. XXI.

Egypt, ſeven preſbyters, twelve deacons, and (what may appear almoſt incredible) ſeven hundred virgins. A large majority of the biſhops of Aſia appeared to ſupport or favour his cauſe; and their meaſures were conducted by Euſebius of Cæſarea, the moſt learned of the Chriſtian prelates; and by Euſebius of Nicomedia, who had acquired the reputation of a ſtateſman without forfeiting that of a ſaint. Synods in Paleſtine and Bithynia were oppoſed to the ſynods of Egypt. The attention of the prince and people was attracted by this theological diſpute; and the deciſion, at the end of ſix years[46], was referred to the ſupreme authority of the general council of Nice. A. D. 318—325.

When the myſteries of the Chriſtian faith were dangerouſly expoſed to public debate, it might be obſerved, that the human underſtanding was capable of forming three diſtinct, though imperfect, ſyſtems, concerning the nature of the Divine Trinity; and it was pronounced, that none of theſe ſyſtems, in a pure and abſolute ſenſe, were exempt from herëſy and error[47]. I. According to the firſt hypotheſis, which was maintained by Arius and his diſciples, the *Logos* was a depend- Three ſyſtems of the Trinity. Arianiſm.

[46] The flames of Arianiſm might burn for ſome time in ſecret; but there is reaſon to believe that they burſt out with violence as early as the year 319. Tillemont, Mem. Eccleſ. tom. vi. p. 774—780.

[47] Quid credidit? Certe, *aut* tria nomina audiens tres Deos eſſe credidit, et idololatra effectus eſt; *aut* in tribus vocabulis trinominem credens Deum, in Sabellii hæreſim incurrit; *aut* edoctus ab Arianis unum eſſe verum Deum Patrem, filium et ſpiritum ſanctum credidit creaturas. Aut extra hæc quid credere potuerit neſcio. Hieronym. adv. Luciferianos. Jerom reſerves for the laſt the orthodox ſyſtem, which is more complicated and difficult.

ent

CHAP. XXI.

ent and ſpontaneous production, created from nothing by the will of the Father. The Son, by whom all things were made[48] had been begotten before all worlds, and the longeſt of the aſtronomical periods could be compared only as a fleeting moment to the extent of his duration; yet this duration was not infinite[49], and there *had* been a time which preceded the ineffable generation of the *Logos*. On this only begotten Son the Almighty Father had transfuſed his ample ſpirit, and impreſſed the effulgence of his glory. Viſible image of inviſible perfection, he ſaw, at an immeaſurable diſtance beneath his feet, the thrones of the brighteſt archangels: yet he ſhone only with a reflected light, and, like the ſons of the Roman emperors, who were inveſted with the titles of Cæſar or Auguſtus[50], he governed the univerſe in obedience to the will of his Father and Monarch. II. In the ſecond hypotheſis, the *Logos* poſſeſſed all the inherent, incommunicable perfections, which religion and philoſophy appropriate to the Supreme God. Three diſtinct and infinite minds or ſubſtances, three co-equal and co-eternal beings, compoſed the Divine Eſſence[51]; and

Tritheiſm.

[48] As the doctrine of abſolute creation from nothing, was gradually introduced among the Chriſtians (Beauſobre, tom. ii. p. 165—215.), the dignity of the *workman* very naturally roſe with that of the *work*.

[49] The metaphyſics of Dr. Clarke (Scripture Trinity, p. 276—280) could diſcern an eternal generation from an infinite cauſe.

[50] This prophane and abſurd ſimile is employed by ſeveral of the primitive fathers, particularly by Athenagoras, in his Apology to the emperor Marcus and his ſon; and it is alleged, without cenſure, by Bull himſelf. See Defenſ. Fid. Nicen. ſ. iii. c. 5. N° 4.

[51] See Cudworth's Intellectual Syſtem, p. 559. 579. This dangerous hypotheſis was countenanced by the two Gregories, of Nyſſa and

and it would have implied contradiction, that any of them ſhould not have exiſted, or that they ſhould ever ceaſe to exiſt [52]. The advocates of a ſyſtem which ſeemed to eſtabliſh three independent Deities, attempted to preſerve the unity of the Firſt Cauſe, ſo conſpicuous in the deſign and order of the world, by the perpetual concord of their adminiſtration, and the eſſential agreement of their will. A faint reſemblance of this unity of action may be diſcovered in the ſocieties of men, and even of animals. The cauſes which diſturb their harmony proceed only from the imperfection and inequality of their faculties; but the omnipotence which is guided by infinite wiſdom and goodneſs, cannot fail of chuſing the ſame means for the accompliſhment of the ſame ends. III. Three Beings, who, by the ſelf-derived neceſſity of their exiſtence, poſſeſs all the divine attributes in the moſt perfect degree; who are eternal in duration, infinite in ſpace, and intimately preſent to each other, and to the whole univerſe; irreſiſtibly force themſelves on the aſtoniſhed mind, as one and the ſame Being [53], who, in the œconomy of grace, as well as in that of

CHAP. XXI.

Sabellianiſm.

and Nazianzen, by Cyril of Alexandria, John of Damaſcus, &c. See Cudworth, p. 603. Le Clerc, Bibliotheque Univerſelle, tom. xviii. p. 97—105.

[52] Auguſtin ſeems to envy the freedom of the philoſophers. Liberis verbis loquuntur philoſophi .... Nos autem non dicimus duo vel tria principia, duos vel tres Deos. De Civitat. Dei, x. 23.

[53] Boetius, who was deeply verſed in the philoſophy of Plato and Ariſtotle, explains the unity of the Trinity by the *in-difference* of the three perſons. See the judicious remarks of Le Clerc, Bibliotheque Choiſie, tom. xvi. p. 225, &c.

CHAP. XXI.

nature, may manifeſt himſelf under different forms, and be conſidered under different aſpects. By this hypotheſis, a real ſubſtantial Trinity is refined into a trinity of names, and abſtract modifications, that ſubſiſt only in the mind which conceives them. The *Logos* is no longer a perſon, but an attribute; and it is only in a figurative ſenſe, that the epithet of Son can be applied to the eternal reaſon which was with God from the beginning, and by *which*, not by *whom*, all things were made. The incarnation of the *Logos* is reduced to a mere inſpiration of the Divine Wiſdom, which filled the ſoul, and directed all the actions of the man Jeſus. Thus, after revolving round the theological circle, we are ſurpriſed to find that the Sabellian ends where the Ebionite had begun; and that the incomprehenſible myſtery which excites our adoration, eludes our enquiry [54].

Council of Nice. A. D. 325.

If the biſhops of the council of Nice [55] had been permitted to follow the unbiaſſed dictates

[54] If the Sabellians were ſtartled at this concluſion, they were driven down another precipice into the confeſſion, that the Father was born of a virgin, that *he* had ſuffered on the croſs; and thus deſerved the odious epithet of *Patri-paſſians*, with which they were branded by their adverſaries. See the invectives of Tertullian againſt Praxeas, and the temperate reflections of Moſheim (p. 423. 681.); and Beauſobre, tom. i. l iii. c. 6. p. 533.

[55] The tranſactions of the council of Nice are related by the ancients, not only in a partial, but in a very imperfect, manner. Such a picture as Fra-Paolo would have drawn, can never be recovered; but ſuch rude ſketches as have been traced by the pencil of bigotry, and that of reaſon, may be ſeen in Tillemont (Mem. Eccleſ. tom. vi. p. 669—759.) and in Le Clerc (Bibliotheque Univerſelle, tom. x. p. 435—454.).

of

CHAP. XXI.

of their conſcience, Arius and his aſſociates could ſcarcely have flattered themſelves with the hopes of obtaining a majority of votes, in favour of an hypotheſis ſo directly adverſe to the two moſt popular opinions of the Catholic world. The Arians ſoon perceived the danger of their ſituation, and prudently aſſumed thoſe modeſt virtues, which, in the fury of civil and religious diſſenſions, are ſeldom practiſed, or even praiſed, except by the weaker party. They recommended the exerciſe of Chriſtian charity and moderation; urged the incomprehenſible nature of the controverſy; diſclaimed the uſe of any terms or definitions which could not be found in the ſcriptures; and offered, by very liberal conceſſions, to ſatisfy their adverſaries, without renouncing the integrity of their own principles. The victorious faction received all their propoſals with haughty ſuſpicion; and anxiouſly ſought for ſome irreconcileable mark of diſtinction, the rejection of which might involve the Arians in the guilt and conſequences of hereſy. A letter was publicly read, and ignominiouſly torn, in which their patron, Euſebius of Nicomedia, ingenuouſly confeſſed, that the admiſſion of the HOMOOUSION, or Conſubſtantial, a word already familiar to the Platoniſts, was incompatible with the principles of their theological ſyſtem. The fortunate opportunity was eagerly embraced by the biſhops, who governed the reſolutions of the ſynod; and, according to the lively expreſſion of Ambroſe [56], they uſed the ſword, which

The Homoouſion.

[56] We are indebted to Ambroſe (de Fide, l. iii. cap. ult.) for the knowledge of this curious anecdote. Hoc verbum poſuerunt Patres, quod

CHAP. XXI.

which herefy itſelf had drawn from the ſcabbard, to cut off the head of the hated monſter. The conſubſtantiality of the Father and the Son was eſtabliſhed by the council of Nice, and has been unanimouſly received as a fundamental article of the Chriſtian faith, by the conſent of the Greek, the Latin, the Oriental, and the Proteſtant churches. But if the ſame word had not ſerved to ſtigmatize the heretics, and to unite the Catholics, it would have been inadequate to the purpoſe of the majority, by whom it was introduced into the orthodox creed. This majority was divided into two parties, diſtinguiſhed by a contrary tendency to the ſentiments of the Tritheiſts and of the Sabellians. But as thoſe oppoſite extremes ſeemed to overthrow the foundations either of natural, or revealed, religion, they mutually agreed to qualify the rigour of their principles; and to diſavow the juſt, but invidious, conſequences, which might be urged by their antagoniſts. The intereſt of the common cauſe inclined them to join their numbers, and to conceal their differences; their animoſity was ſoftened by the healing counſels of toleration, and their diſputes were ſuſpended by the uſe of the myſterious *Homoouſion*, which either party was free to interpret according to their peculiar tenets. The Sabellian ſenſe, which, about fifty years before, had obliged the council of Antioch[57] to prohibit

quod viderunt adverſariis eſſe formidini; ut tanquam evaginato ab ipſis gladio, ipſum nefandæ caput hereſeos amputarent.

[57] See Bull, Defenſ. Fid. Nicen. ſect. ii. c. i. p. 25—36. He thinks it his duty to reconcile two orthodox ſynods.

this

this celebrated term, had endeared it to thoſe theologians who entertained a ſecret but partial affection for a nominal Trinity. But the more faſhionable ſaints of the Arian times, the intrepid Athanaſius, the learned Gregory Nazianzen, and the other pillars of the church, who ſupported with ability and ſucceſs the Nicene doctrine, appeared to conſider the expreſſion of *ſubſtance*, as if it had been ſynonimous with that of *nature*; and they ventured to illuſtrate their meaning, by affirming that three men, as they belong to the ſame common ſpecies, are conſubſtantial or homoouſian to each other[58]. This pure and diſtinct equality was tempered, on the one hand, by the internal connection, and ſpiritual penetration, which indiſſolubly unites the divine perſons[59]; and on the other, by the pre-eminence of the Father, which was acknowledged as far as it is compatible with the independence of the Son[60]. Within theſe limits the almoſt inviſible and tremulous ball of orthodoxy was allowed ſecurely to vibrate. On either ſide, beyond this conſecrated ground, the

[58] According to Ariſtotle, the ſtars were homoouſion to each other. "That *Homoouſios* means of one ſubſtance in *kind*, hath been "ſhewn by Petavius, Curcellæus, Cudworth, Le Clerc, &c. and to "prove it, would be *actum agere*." This is the juſt remark of Dr. Jortin (vol. ii. p. 212), who examines the Arian controverſy with learning, candour, and ingenuity.

[59] See Petavius (Dogm. Theolog. tom. ii. l. iv. c. 16. p. 453, &c.), Cudworth (p 559.), Bull (ſect. iv. p. 285—290. edit. Grab.). The περιχωρησις or *circumincеſſio*, is perhaps the deepeſt and darkeſt corner of the whole theological abyſs.

[60] The third ſection of Bull's Defence of the Nicene Faith, which ſome of his antagoniſts have called nonſenſe, and others hereſy, is conſecrated to the ſupremacy of the Father.

heretics

CHAP. XXI.

heretics and the dæmons lurked in ambuſh to ſurpriſe and devour the unhappy wanderer. But as the degrees of theological hatred depend on the ſpirit of the war, rather than on the importance of the controverſy, the heretics who degraded, were treated with more ſeverity than thoſe who annihilated, the perſon of the Son. The life of Athanaſius was conſumed in irreconcileable oppoſition to the impious *madneſs* of the Arians[61]; but he defended above twenty years the Sabellianiſm of Marcellus of Ancyra; and when at laſt he was compelled to withdraw himſelf from his communion, he continued to mention, with an ambiguous ſmile, the venial errors of his reſpectable friend[62].

Arian creeds.

The authority of a general council, to which the Arians themſelves had been compelled to ſubmit, inſcribed on the banners of the orthodox party the myſterious characters of the word *Homoouſion*, which eſſentially contributed, notwithſtanding ſome obſcure diſputes, ſome nocturnal combats, to maintain and perpetuate the uniformity of faith, or at leaſt of language. The Conſubſtantialiſts, who by their ſucceſs have deſerved and obtained the title of Catholics, gloried in the ſimplicity and ſteadineſs of their own creed,

[61] The ordinary appellation with which Athanaſius and his followers choſe to compliment the Arians, was that of *Ariomanites*.

[62] Epiphanius, tom. i. Hæreſ. lxxii. 4. p. 837. See the adventures of Marcellus, in Tillemont (Mem. Eccleſ. tom. vii. p. 880—899.). His work, in *one* book, of the unity of God, was anſwered in the *three* books, which are ſtill extant, of Euſebius. After a long and careful examination, Petavius (tom. ii. l. i. c. 14. p. 78.) has reluctantly pronounced the condemnation of Marcellus.

and

and insulted the repeated variations of their adversaries, who were destitute of any certain rule of faith. The sincerity or the cunning of the Arian chiefs, the fear of the laws or of the people, their reverence for Christ, their hatred of Athanasius, all the causes, human and divine, that influence and disturb the counsels of a theological faction, introduced among the sectaries a spirit of discord and inconstancy, which, in the course of a few years, erected eighteen different models of religion[63], and avenged the violated dignity of the church. The zealous Hilary[64], who, from the peculiar hardships of his situation, was inclined to extenuate rather than to aggravate the errors of the oriental clergy, declares, that in the wide extent of the ten provinces of Asia, to which he had been banished, there could be found very few prelates who had preserved the knowledge of the true God[65]. The oppression which he had felt, the disorders of which he was the spectator and the victim, appeased, during a short interval,

CHAP. XXI.

[63] Athanasius in his epistle concerning the synods of Seleucia and Rimini (tom. i. p. 886—905.), has given an ample list of Arian creeds, which has been enlarged and improved by the labours of the indefatigable Tillemont (Mem. Eccles. tom. vi. p. 477.).

[64] Erasmus, with admirable sense and freedom, has delineated the just character of Hilary. To revise his text, to compose the annals of his life, and to justify his sentiments and conduct, is the province of the Benedictine editors.

[65] Absque episcopo Eleusio et paucis cum eo, ex majore parte Asianæ decem provinciæ, inter quas consisto, vere Deum nescium. Atque utinam penitus nescirent! cum procliviore enim venia ignorarent quam obtrectarent. Hilar. de Synodis, sive de Fide Orientalium, c. 63. p. 1186. edit. Benedict. In the celebrated parallel between atheism and superstition, the bishop of Poitiers would have been surprised in the philosophic society of Bayle and Plutarch.

CHAP. XXI.

the angry paſſions of his ſoul; and in the following paſſage of which I ſhall tranſcribe a few lines, the biſhop of Poitiers unwarily deviates into the ſtyle of a Chriſtian philoſopher. "It is a thing," ſays Hilary, "equally deplorable and dangerous, "that there are as many creeds as opinions among "men, as many doctrines as inclinations, and as "many ſources of blaſphemy as there are faults "among us; becauſe we make creeds arbitrarily, "and explain them as arbitrarily. The Homo-"ouſion is rejected, and received, and explained "away by ſucceſſive ſynods. The partial or total "reſemblance of the Father and of the Son, is a "ſubject of diſpute for theſe unhappy times. "Every year, nay every moon, we make new creeds "to deſcribe inviſible myſteries. We repent of "what we have done, we defend thoſe who repent, "we anathematiſe thoſe whom we defended. "We condemn either the doctrine of others in "ourſelves, or our own in that of others; and "reciprocally tearing one another to pieces, we "have been the cauſe of each other's ruin[66]."

Arian ſects.

It will not be expected, it would not perhaps be endured, that I ſhould ſwell this theological digreſſion, by a minute examination of the eighteen creeds, the authors of which, for the moſt part, diſclaimed the odious name of their parent Arius. It is amuſing enough to delineate the form, and to trace the vegetation, of a ſingular plant; but

[66] Hilarius ad Conſtantium, l. ii. c. 4, 5. p. 1227, 1228. This remarkable paſſage deſerved the attention of Mr. Locke, who has tranſcribed it (vol. iii. p. 470.) into the model of his new common-place book.

CHAP. XXI.

the tedious detail of leaves without flowers, and of branches without fruit, would ſoon exhauſt the patience, and diſappoint the curioſity, of the laborious ſtudent. One queſtion which gradually aroſe from the Arian controverſy, may however be noticed, as it ſerved to produce and diſcriminate the three ſects, who were united only by their common averſion to the Homoouſion of the Nicene ſynod. 1. If they were aſked, whether the Son was *like* unto the Father; the queſtion was reſolutely anſwered in the negative, by the heretics who adhered to the principles of Arius, or indeed to thoſe of philoſophy; which ſeem to eſtabliſh an infinite difference between the Creator and the moſt excellent of his creatures. This obvious conſequence was maintained by Ætius [67], on whom the zeal of his adverſaries beſtowed the ſurname of the Atheiſt. His reſtleſs and aſpiring ſpirit urged him to try almoſt every profeſſion of human life. He was ſucceſſively a ſlave, or at leaſt a huſbandman, a travelling tinker, a goldſmith, a phyſician, a ſchoolmaſter, a theologian, and at laſt the apoſtle of a new church, which was propagated by the abilities of his diſciple Eunomius [68]. Armed with texts of ſcripture, and with captious

[67] In Philoſtorgius (l. iii. c. 15.) the character and adventures of Ætius appear ſingular enough, though they are carefully ſoftened by the hand of a friend. The editor Godefroy (p. 153.), who was more attached to his principles than to his author, has collected the odious circumſtances which his various adverſaries have preſerved or invented.

[68] According to the judgment of a man who reſpected both thoſe ſectaries, Ætius had been endowed with a ſtronger underſtanding,

CHAP. XXI.

captious ſyllogiſms from the logic of Ariſtotle, the ſubtle Ætius had acquired the fame of an invincible diſputant, whom it was impoſſible either to ſilence or to convince. Such talents engaged the friendſhip of the Arian biſhops, till they were forced to renounce and even to perſecute, a dangerous ally, who, by the accuracy of his reaſoning, had prejudiced their cauſe in the popular opinion, and offended the piety of their moſt devoted followers. 2. The omnipotence of the Creator ſuggeſted a ſpecious and reſpectful ſolution of the *likeneſs* of the Father and the Son; and faith might humbly receive what reaſon could not preſume to deny, that the Supreme God might communicate his infinite perfections, and create a being ſimilar only to himſelf[69]. Theſe Arians were powerfully ſupported by the weight and abilities of their leaders, who had ſucceeded to the management of the Euſebian intereſt, and who occupied the principal thrones of the Eaſt. They deteſted, perhaps with ſome affectation, the impiety of Ætius; they profeſſed to believe, either without reſerve, or according to the ſcriptures, that the Son was different from all *other* creatures, and ſimilar only to the Father. But they denied, that

and Eunomius had acquired more art and learning (Philoſtorgius, l. viii. c. 18.). The confeſſion and apology of Eunomius (Fabricius, Bibliot. Græc. tom. viii. p. 258—305.) is one of the few heretical pieces which have eſcaped.

[69] Yet, according to the opinion of Eſtius and Bull (p. 297.), there is one power, that of creation, which God *cannot* communicate to a creature. Eſtius, who ſo accurately defined the limits of Omnipotence, was a Dutchman by birth, and by trade a ſcholaſtic divine. Dupin, Bibliot. Eccleſ. tom. xvii. p. 45.

he

he was either of the ſame, or of a ſimilar ſubſtance; ſometimes boldly juſtifying their diſſent, and ſometimes objecting to the uſe of the word ſubſtance, which ſeems to imply an adequate, or at leaſt a diſtinct notion of the nature of the Deity. 3. The ſect which aſſerted the doctrine of a ſimilar ſubſtance, was the moſt numerous, at leaſt in the provinces of Aſia; and when the leaders of both parties were aſſembled in the council of Seleucia [70], *their* opinion would have prevailed by a majority of one hundred and five to forty-three biſhops. The Greek word, which was choſen to expreſs this myſterious reſemblance, bears ſo cloſe an affinity to the orthodox ſymbol, that the profane of every age have derided the furious conteſts which the difference of a ſingle diphthong excited between the Homoouſians and the Homoiouſians. As it frequently happens, that the ſounds and characters which approach the neareſt to each other, accidentally repreſent the moſt oppoſite ideas, the obſervation would be itſelf ridiculous, if it were poſſible to mark any real and ſenſible diſtinction between the doctrine of the Semi-Arians, as they were improperly ſtyled, and that of the Catholics themſelves. The biſhop of Poitiers, who in his Phrygian exile very wiſely aimed at a coalition of parties, endeavours to prove that, by a pious and faithful interpretation [71], the *Homoiouſion* may be reduced

[70] Sabinus (ap. Socrat. l. ii. c. 39.) had copied the acts; Athanaſius and Hilary have explained the diviſions of this Arian ſynod; the other circumſtances which are relative to it are carefully collected by Baronius and Tillemont.

[71] Fideli et piâ intelligentiâ ... De Synod. c. 77. p. 1193. In his ſhort apologetical notes (firſt publiſhed by the Benedictines from a MS.

CHAP. XXI.

reduced to a consubstantial sense. Yet he confesses that the word has a dark and suspicious aspect; and, as if darkness were congenial to theological disputes, the Semi-Arians, who advanced to the doors of the church, assailed them with the most unrelenting fury.

Faith of the Western or Latin church.

The provinces of Egypt and Asia, which cultivated the language and manners of the Greeks, had deeply imbibed the venom of the Arian controversy. The familiar study of the Platonic system, a vain and argumentative disposition, a copious and flexible idiom, supplied the clergy and people of the East with an inexhaustible flow of words and distinctions; and, in the midst of their fierce contentions, they easily forgot the doubt which is recommended by philosophy, and the submission which is enjoined by religion. The inhabitants of the West were of a less inquisitive spirit; their passions were not so forcibly moved by invisible objects; their minds were less frequently exercised by the habits of dispute, and such was the happy ignorance of the Gallican church, that Hilary himself, above thirty years after the first general council, was still a stranger to the Nicene creed [72]. The Latins had received

MS. of Charters) he observes, that he used this cautious expression, qui intelligerem et impiam, p 1206. See p. 1146. Philostorgius, who saw those objects through a different medium, is inclined to forget the difference of the important diphthong. See in particular viii. 17. and Godefroy, p. 352.

[72] Testor Deum cœli atque terræ mecum neutrum audisse, semper tamen utrumque sensisse.... Regeneratus pridem & in episcopatu aliquantisper manens fidem Nicenam nunquam nisi exsulaturus audivi. Hilar. de Synodis, c. xci. p. 1205. The Benedictines are persuaded that he governed the diocese of Poitiers several years before his exile.

the

the rays of divine knowledge through the dark and doubtful medium of a tranſlation. The poverty and ſtubbornneſs of their native tongue, was not always capable of affording juſt equivalents for the Greek terms, for the technical words of the Platonic philoſophy[73], which had been conſecrated by the goſpel or by the church, to expreſs the myſteries of the Chriſtian faith; and a verbal defect might introduce into the Latin theology, a long train of error or perplexity[74]. But as the weſtern provincials had the good fortune of deriving their religion from an orthodox ſource, they preſerved with ſteadineſs the doctrine which they had accepted with docility; and when the Arian peſtilence approached their frontiers, they were ſupplied with the ſeaſonable preſervative of the Homoouſion, by the paternal care of the Roman pontiff. Their ſentiments and their temper were diſplayed in the memorable ſynod of Rimini, which ſurpaſſed in numbers the council of Nice, ſince it was compoſed of above four hundred biſhops of Italy, Africa, Spain, Gaul, Britain, and Illyricum. From the firſt debates it appeared, that only fourſcore prelates adhered to the party, though *they* affected to anathematiſe the name and memory, of Arius. But this inferiority was compenſated by the advantages of ſkill, of experience,

Council of Rimini, A. D. 360.

[73] Seneca (Epiſt. lviii.) complains that even the το ον of the Platoniſts (the *ens* of the bolder ſchoolmen) could not be expreſſed by a Latin noun.

[74] The preference which the fourth council of the Lateran at length gave to a *numerical* rather than a *generical* unity (ſee Petav. tom. ii. l. iv. c. 13. p. 424.) was favoured by the Latin language; τριας ſeems to excite the idea of ſubſtance, *trinitas* of qualities.

CHAP. XXI.

and of diſcipline; and the minority was conducted by Valens and Urſacius, two biſhops of Illyricum, who had ſpent their lives in the intrigues of courts and councils, and who had been trained under the Euſebian banner, in the religious wars of the Eaſt. By their arguments and negociations, they embarraſſed, they confounded, they at laſt deceived, the honeſt ſimplicity of the Latin biſhops; who ſuffered the palladium of the faith to be extorted from their hands by fraud and importunity, rather than by open violence. The council of Rimini was not allowed to ſeparate, till the members had imprudently ſubſcribed a captious creed, in which ſome expreſſions, ſuſceptible of an heretical ſenſe, were inſerted in the room of the Homoouſion. It was on this occaſion, that, according to Jerom, the world was ſurpriſed to find itſelf Arian[75]. But the biſhops of the Latin provinces had no ſooner reached their reſpective dioceſes, than they diſcovered their miſtake, and repented of their weakneſs. The ignominious capitulation was rejected with diſdain and abhorrence; and the Homoouſian ſtandard, which had been ſhaken but not overthrown, was more firmly replanted in all the churches of the Weſt[76].

Conduct of the emperors in the Arian controverſy.

Such was the riſe and progreſs, and ſuch were the natural revolutions of thoſe theological diſ-

[75] Ingemuit totus orbis, et Arianum ſe eſſe miratus eſt. Hieronym. adv. Luciſer. tom. i. p. 145.

[76] The ſtory of the council of Rimini is very elegantly told by Sulpicius Severus (Hiſt. Sacra, l ii. p. 419—430. edit. Lugd. Bat. 1647.), and by Jerom, in his dialogue againſt the Luciferians. The deſign of the latter is to apologize for the conduct of the Latin biſhops, who were deceived, and who repented.

putes,

putes, which disturbed the peace of Christianity under the reigns of Constantine and of his sons. But as those princes presumed to extend their despotism over the faith, as well as over the lives and fortunes, of their subjects; the weight of their suffrage sometimes inclined the ecclesiastical balance: and the prerogatives of the King of Heaven were settled, or changed, or modified, in the cabinet of an earthly monarch.

Indifference of Constantine, A.D. 324.

The unhappy spirit of discord which pervaded the provinces of the East, interrupted the triumph of Constantine; but the emperor continued for some time to view, with cool and careless indifference, the object of the dispute. As he was yet ignorant of the difficulty of appeasing the quarrels of theologians, he addressed to the contending parties, to Alexander and to Arius, a moderating epistle[77]; which may be ascribed, with far greater reason, to the untutored sense of a soldier and statesman, than to the dictates of any of his episcopal counsellors. He attributes the origin of the whole controversy to a trifling and subtle question, concerning an incomprehensible point of the law, which was foolishly asked by the bishop, and imprudently resolved by the presbyter. He laments that the Christian people, who had the same God, the same religion, and the same worship, should be divided by such inconsiderable

77 Eusebius, in Vit. Constant. l. ii. c. 64—72. The principles of toleration and religious indifference, contained in this epistle, have given great offence to Baronius, Tillemont, &c. who suppose that the emperor had some evil counsellor, either Satan or Eusebius, at his elbow. See Jortin's Remarks, tom. ii. p. 183.

distinctions;

CHAP. XXI.

distinctions; and he seriously recommends to the clergy of Alexandria the example of the Greek philosophers; who could maintain their arguments without losing their temper, and assert their freedom without violating their friendship. The indifference and contempt of the sovereign would have been, perhaps, the most effectual method of silencing the dispute: if the popular current had been less rapid and impetuous; and if Constantine himself, in the midst of faction and fanaticism, could have preserved the calm possession of his own mind. But his ecclesiastical ministers soon contrived to seduce the impartiality of the magistrate, and to awaken the zeal of the proselyte. He was provoked by the insults which had been offered to his statues; he was alarmed by the real, as well as the imaginary, magnitude of the spreading mischief; and he extinguished the hope of peace and toleration, from the moment that he assembled three hundred bishops within the walls of the same palace. The presence of the monarch swelled the importance of the debate; his attention multiplied the arguments; and he exposed his person with a patient intrepidity, which animated the valour of the combatants. Notwithstanding the applause which has been bestowed on the eloquence and sagacity of Constantine[78]; a Roman general, whose religion might be still a subject of doubt, and whose mind had not been enlightened either by study or by inspiration, was indifferently qualified to discuss, in the Greek

His zeal, A.D. 325.

[78] Eusebius, in Vit. Constantin. l. iii. c. 13.

language,

CHAP. XXI.

language, a metephyſical queſtion, or an article of faith. But the credit of his favourite Oſius, who appears to have preſided in the council of Nice, might diſpoſe the emperor in favour of the orthodox party; and a well-timed inſinuation, that the ſame Euſebius of Nicomedia, who now protected the heretic, had lately aſſiſted the tyrant[79], might exaſperate him againſt their adverſaries. The Nicene creed was ratified by Conſtantine; and his firm declaration, that thoſe who reſiſted the divine judgment of the ſynod, muſt prepare themſelves for an immediate exile, annihilated the murmurs of a feeble oppoſition; which from ſeventeen, was almoſt inſtantly reduced to two, proteſting biſhops. Euſebius of Cæſarea yielded a reluctant and ambiguous conſent to the Homoouſion[80]; and the wavering conduct of the Nicomedian Euſebius ſerved only to delay, about three months, his diſgrace and exile[81]. The impious Arius was baniſhed into one of the remote provinces of Illyricum; his perſon and diſciples were branded by law, with the odious name of

He perſecutes the Arian

[79] Theodoret has preſerved (l. i. c. 20.) an epiſtle from Conſtantine to the people of Nicomedia, in which the monarch declares himſelf the public accuſer of one of his ſubjects; he ſtyles Euſebius, ὁ τῆς τυραννικῆς ὁμοτηκῶν συμμύστης; and complains of his hoſtile behaviour during the civil war.

[80] See in Socrates (l. i. c. 8.), or rather in Theodoret (l. 1. c. 12.), an original letter of Euſebius of Cæſarea, in which he attempts to juſtify his ſubſcribing the Homoouſion. The character of Euſebius has always been a problem; but thoſe who have read the ſecond critical epiſtle of Le Clerc (Ars Critica, tom. iii. p. 30—69.), muſt entertain a very unfavourable opinion of the orthodoxy and ſincerity of the biſhop of Cæſarea.

[81] Athanaſius, tom. i. p. 727. Philoſtorgius, l. i. c. 10. and Godefroy Commentary, p. 41.

Porphyrians;

CHAP. XXI.

Porphyrians; his writings were condemned to the flames; and a capital punishment was denounced against those in whose possession they should be found. The emperor had now imbibed the spirit of controversy, and the angry sarcastic style of his edicts was designed to inspire his subjects with the hatred which he had conceived against the enemies of Christ [52].

and the orthodox party, A. D. 328—337.

But, as if the conduct of the emperor had been guided by passion instead of principle, three years from the council of Nice were scarcely elapsed, before he discovered some symptoms of mercy, and even of indulgence, towards the proscribed sect, which was secretly protected by his favourite sister. The exiles were recalled; and Eusebius, who gradually resumed his influence over the mind of Constantine, was restored to the episcopal throne, from which he had been ignominiously degraded. Arius himself was treated by the whole court with the respect which would have been due to an innocent and oppressed man. His faith was approved by the synod of Jerusalem; and the emperor seemed impatient to repair his injustice, by issuing an absolute command, that he should be solemnly admitted to the communion in the cathedral of Constantinople. On the same day, which had been fixed for the triumph of Arius, he expired;—and the strange and horrid circumstances of his death might excite a suspicion, that

[52] Socrates, l. i. c. 9. In his circular letters, which were addressed to the several cities, Constantine employed against the heretics the arms of ridicule and *comic* raillery.

the

the orthodox ſaints had contributed more efficaciouſly than by their prayers, to deliver the church from the moſt formidable of her enemies[83]. The three principal leaders of the Catholics, Athanaſius of Alexandria, Euſtathius of Antioch, and Paul of Conſtantinople, were depoſed on various accuſations, by the ſentence of numerous councils; and were afterwards baniſhed into diſtant provinces by the firſt of the Chriſtian emperors, who, in the laſt moments of his life, received the rites of baptiſm from the Arian biſhop of Nicomedia. The eccleſiaſtical government of Conſtantine cannot be juſtified from the reproach of levity and weakneſs. But the credulous monarch, unſkilled in the ſtratagems of theological warfare, might be deceived by the modeſt and ſpecious profeſſions of the heretics, whoſe ſentiments he never perfectly underſtood; and while he protected Arius, and perſecuted Athanaſius, he ſtill conſidered the council of Nice as the bulwark of the Chriſtian faith, and the peculiar glory of his own reign[84].

[83] We derive the original ſtory from Athanaſius (tom. i. p. 670.), who expreſſes ſome reluctance to ſtigmatize the memory of the dead. He might exaggerate; but the perpetual commerce of Alexandria and Conſtantinople would have rendered it dangerous to invent. Thoſe who preſs the literal narrative of the death of Arius (his bowels ſuddenly burſt out in a privy) muſt make their option between *poiſon* and *miracle*.

[84] The change in the ſentiments, or at leaſt in the conduct, of Conſtantine, may be traced in Euſebius (in Vit. Conſtant. l. iii. c. 23. l. iv. c. 41.), Socrates (l. i. c. 23—39.), Sozomen (l. ii. c. 16—34.), Theodoret (l. i. c. 14—34.), and Philoſtorgius (l. ii. c. 1—17.) But the firſt of theſe writers was too near the ſcene of action, and the others were too remote from it. It is ſingular enough, that the important taſk of continuing the hiſtory of the church, ſhould have been left for two laymen and a heretic.

The

CHAP. XXI.

Conſtantius favours the Arians, A. D. 337—361.

The ſons of Conſtantine muſt have been admitted from their childhood into the rank of catechumens, but they imitated, in the delay of their baptiſm, the example of their father. Like him, they preſumed to pronounce their judgment on myſteries into which they had never been regularly initiated[85]: and the fate of the Trinitarian controverſy depended, in a great meaſure, on the ſentiments of Conſtantius; who inherited the provinces of the Eaſt, and acquired the poſſeſſion of the whole empire. The Arian preſbyter or biſhop, who had ſecreted for his uſe the teſtament of the deceaſed emperor, improved the fortunate occaſion which had introduced him to the familiarity of a prince, whoſe public counſels were always ſwayed by his domeſtic favourites. The eunuchs and ſlaves diffuſed the ſpiritual poiſon through the palace, and the dangerous infection was communicated by the female attendants to the guards, and by the empreſs to her unſuſpicious huſband[86]. The partiality which Conſtantius always expreſſed towards the Euſebian faction, was inſenſibly fortified by the dexterous management of their leaders; and his victory over the tyrant Magnentius increaſed his inclination, as well as ability, to employ the arms of power in the cauſe of Arianiſm. While the two armies were engaged in the plains

[85] Quia etiam tum catechumenus ſacramentum fidei merito videretur potuiſſe neſcire. Sulp. Sever. Hiſt. Sacra, l. ii. p. 410.

[86] Socrates, l. ii. c. 2. Sozomen, l. iii. c. 18. Athanaſ. tom. i. p. 813. 834. He obſerves, that the eunuchs are the natural enemies of the *Son*. Compare Dr. Jortin's Remarks on Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, vol. iv. p. 3. with a certain genealogy in *Candide* (ch. iv.), which ends with one of the firſt companions of Chriſtopher Columbus.

of

of Murſa, and the fate of the two rivals depended on the chance of war, the ſon of Conſtantine paſſed the anxious moments in a church of the martyrs, under the walls of the city. His ſpiritual comforter, Valens, the Arian biſhop of the dioceſe, employed the moſt artful precautions to obtain ſuch early intelligence as might ſecure either his favour or his eſcape. A ſecret chain of ſwift and truſty meſſengers informed him of the viciſſitudes of the battle; and while the courtiers ſtood trembling round their affrighted maſter, Valens aſſured him that the Gallic legions gave way; and, inſinuated with ſome preſence of mind, that the glorious event had been revealed to him by an angel. The grateful emperor aſcribed his ſucceſs to the merits and interceſſion of the biſhop of Murſa, whoſe faith had deſerved the public and miraculous approbation of Heaven [87]. The Arians, who conſidered as their own the victory of Conſtantius, preferred his glory to that of his Father [88]. Cyril, biſhop of Jeruſalem, immediately compoſed the deſcription of a celeſtial croſs, encircled with a ſplendid rainbow; which during the feſtival of Pentecoſt, about the third hour of the day, had

CHAP. XXI.

[87] Sulpicius Severus, in Hiſt. Sacra, l. ii. p. 405, 406.

[88] Cyril (apud Baron. A. D. 353. N° 26.) expreſsly obſerves, that in the reign of Conſtantine the croſs had been found in the bowels of the earth; but that it had appeared in the reign of Conſtantius, in the midſt of the heavens. This oppoſition evidently proves, that Cyril was ignorant of the ſtupendous miracle to which the converſion of Conſtantine is attributed; and this ignorance is the more ſurpriſing, ſince it was no more than twelve years after his death that Cyril was conſecrated biſhop of Jeruſalem, by the immediate ſucceſſor of Euſebius of Cæſarea. See Tillemont, Mem. Eccleſ. tom. viii. p. 715.

appeared

CHAP. XXI.

appeared over the Mount of Olives, to the edification of the devout pilgrims, and the people of the holy city [89]. The size of the meteor was gradually magnified; and the Arian historian has ventured to affirm, that it was conspicuous to the two armies in the plains of Pannonia; and that the tyrant, who is purposely represented as an idolater, fled before the auspicious sign of orthodox Christianity [90].

Arian councils.

The sentiments of a judicious stranger, who has impartially considered the progress of civil or ecclesiastical discord, are always entitled to our notice: and a short passage of Ammianus, who served in the armies, and studied the character, of Constantius, is perhaps of more value than many pages of theological invectives. "The Christian "religion, which, in itself," says that moderate historian, "is plain and simple, *he* confounded "by the dotage of superstition. Instead of re- "conciling the parties by the weight of his autho- "rity, he cherished and propagated, by verbal "disputes, the differences which his vain curiosity "had excited. The highways were covered with "troops of bishops, galloping from every side to "the assemblies, which they call synods; and "while they laboured to reduce the whole sect to "their own particular opinions, the public estab-

[89] It is not easy to determine how far the ingenuity of Cyril might be assisted by some natural appearances of a solar halo.

[90] Philostorgius, l. iii. c. 26. He is followed by the author of the Alexandrian Chronicle, by Cedrenus, and by Nicephorus (see Gothofred. Dissert. p. 188.). They could not refuse a miracle, even from the hand of an enemy.

"lishment

CHAP. XXI.

"liſhment of the poſts was almoſt ruined by their "haſty and repeated journies [91]." Our more intimate knowledge of the eccleſiaſtical tranſactions of the reign of Conſtantius, would furniſh an ample commentary on this remarkable paſſage; which juſtifies the rational apprehenſions of Athanaſius, that the reſtleſs activity of the clergy, who wandered round the empire in ſearch of the true faith, would excite the contempt and laughter of the unbelieving world [92]. As ſoon as the emperor was relieved from the terrors of the civil war, he devoted the leiſure of his winter-quarters at Arles, Milan, Sirmium, and Conſtantinople, to the amuſements or toils of controverſy: the ſword of the magiſtrate, and even of the tyrant, was unſheathed, to enforce the reaſons of the theologian; and as he oppoſed the orthodox faith of Nice, it is readily confeſſed that his incapacity and ignorance were equal to his preſumption [93]. The eunuchs, the women, and the biſhops, who governed the vain and feeble mind of the emperor, had inſpired him with an inſuperable diſlike to the Homoouſion; but his timid conſcience was

[91] So curious a paſſage well deſerves to be tranſcribed. Chriſtianam religionem abſolutam et ſimplicem, anili ſuperſtitione confundens; in quâ ſcrutandâ perplexius, quam componendâ gravius excitaret diſcidia plurima; quæ progreſſa fuſius aluit concertatione verborum, ut catervis antiſtitum jumentis publicis ultro citroque diſcurrentibus, per ſynodos (quas appellant) dum ritum omnem ad ſuum trahere conantur (Valeſius reads *conatur*) rei vehiculariæ concideret nervos. Ammianus, xxi. 16.

[92] Athanaſ. tom. i. p. 870.

[93] Socrates, l. ii. c. 35—47. Sozomen. l. iv. c. 12—30. Theodoret, l. ii. c. 18—32. Philoſtorg. l. iv. c. 4—12. l. v. c. 1—4. l. vi. c. 1—5.

CHAP. XXI.

alarmed by the impiety of Ætius. The guilt of that atheiſt was aggravated by the ſuſpicious favour of the unfortunate Gallus; and even the deaths of the Imperial miniſters, who had been maſſacred at Antioch, were imputed to the ſuggeſtions of that dangerous ſophiſt. The mind of Conſtantius, which could neither be moderated by reaſon, nor fixed by faith, was blindly impelled to either ſide of the dark and empty abyſs, by his horror of the oppoſite extreme: he alternately embraced and condemned the ſentiments, he ſucceſſively baniſhed and recalled the leaders, of the Arian and Semi-Arian factions[94]. During the ſeaſon of public buſineſs or feſtivity, he employed whole days, and even nights, in ſelecting the words, and weighing the ſyllables, which compoſed his fluctuating creeds. The ſubject of his meditation ſtill purſued and occupied his ſlumbers; the incoherent dreams of the emperor were received as celeſtial viſions; and he accepted with complacency the lofty title of biſhop of biſhops, from thoſe eccleſiaſtics who forgot the intereſt of their order for the gratification of their paſſions. The deſign of eſtabliſhing an uniformity of doctrine, which had engaged him to convene ſo many ſynods in Gaul, Italy, Illyricum, and Aſia, was repeatedly baffled by his own

94 Sozomen, l. iv. c. 23. Athanaſ. tom. i. p. 831. Tillemont (Mem. Eccleſ. tom. vii. p. 947.) has collected ſeveral inſtances of the haughty fanaticiſm of Conſtantius from the detached treatiſes of Lucifer of Cagliari. The very titles of theſe treatiſes inſpire zeal and terror; "Moriendum pro Dei Filio." "De Regibus "Apoſtaticis." "De non conveniendo cum Hæretico." "De non parcendo in Deum delinquentibus."

levity,

levity, by the diviſions of the Arians, and by the reſiſtance of the catholics; and he reſolved, as the laſt and deciſive effort, imperiouſly to dictate the decrees of a general council. The deſtructive earthquake of Nicomedia, the difficulty of finding a convenient place, and perhaps ſome ſecret motives of policy, produced an alteration in the ſummons. The biſhops of the Eaſt were directed to meet at Seleucia, in Iſauria; while thoſe of the Weſt held their deliberations at Rimini, on the coaſt of the Hadriatic; and inſtead of two or three deputies from each province, the whole epiſcopal body was ordered to march. The Eaſtern council, after conſuming four days in fierce and unavailing debate, ſeparated without any definitive concluſion. The council of the Weſt was protracted till the ſeventh month. Taurus, the Prætorian præfect, was inſtructed not to diſmiſs the prelates till they ſhould all be united in the ſame opinion; and his efforts were ſupported by a power of baniſhing fifteen of the moſt refractory, and a promiſe of the conſulſhip if he atchieved ſo difficult an adventure. His A. D. 360. prayers and threats, the authority of the ſovereign, the ſophiſtry of Valens and Urſacius, the diſtreſs of cold and hunger, and the tedious melancholy of a hopeleſs exile, at length extorted the reluctant conſent of the biſhops of Rimini. The deputies of the Eaſt and of the Weſt attended the emperor in the palace of Conſtantinople, and he enjoyed the ſatisfaction of impoſing on the world a profeſſion of faith which eſtabliſhed the *likeneſs*, without expreſſing the *conſubſtantiality*, of the Son of

CHAP. XXI.

CHAP. XXI.

God [95]. But the triumph of Arianism had been preceded by the removal of the orthodox clergy, whom it was impossible either to intimidate or to corrupt; and the reign of Constantius was disgraced by the unjust and ineffectual persecution of the great Athanasius.

Character and adventures of Athanasius.

We have seldom an opportunity of observing, either in active or speculative life, what effect may be produced, or what obstacles may be surmounted, by the force of a single mind, when it is inflexibly applied to the pursuit of a single object. The immortal name of Athanasius [96] will never be separated from the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity, to whose defence he consecrated every moment and every faculty of his being. Educated in the family of Alexander, he had vigorously opposed the early progress of the Arian heresy: he exercised the important functions of secretary under the aged prelate; and the fathers of the Nicene council beheld with surprise and respect, the rising virtues of the young deacon. In a time of public danger, the dull claims of age and of

[95] Sulp. Sever. Hist. Sacra, l. ii. p. 418—430. The Greek historians were very ignorant of the affairs of the West.

[96] We may regret that Gregory Nazianzen composed a panegyric instead of a life of Athanasius; but we should enjoy and improve the advantage of drawing our most authentic materials from the rich fund of his own epistles and apologies (tom. i. p. 670—951.). I shall not imitate the example of Socrates (l. ii. c. 1.), who published the first edition of his history without giving himself the trouble to consult the writings of Athanasius. Yet even Socrates, the more curious Sozomen, and the learned Theodoret, connect the life of Athanasius with the series of ecclesiastical history. The diligence of Tillemont (tom. viii.) and of the Benedictine editors, has collected every fact, and examined every difficulty.

rank

CHAP. XXI.

rank are ſometimes ſuperſeded; and within five months after his return from Nice, the deacon Athanaſius was ſeated on the archiepiſcopal throne of Egypt. He filled that eminent ſtation above forty-ſix years, and his long adminiſtration was ſpent in a perpetual combat againſt the powers of Arianiſm. Five times was Athanaſius expelled from his throne; twenty years he paſſed as an exile or a fugitive; and almoſt every province of the Roman empire was ſucceſſively witneſs to his merit, and his ſufferings in the cauſe of the Homoouſion, which he conſidered as the ſole pleaſure and buſineſs, as the duty, and as the glory, of his life. Amidſt the ſtorms of perſecution, the archbiſhop of Alexandria was patient of labour, jealous of fame, careleſs of ſafety; and although his mind was tainted by the contagion of fanaticiſm, Athanaſius diſplayed a ſuperiority of character and abilities, which would have qualified him, far better than the degenerate ſons of Conſtantine, for the government of a great monarchy. His learning was much leſs profound and extenſive than that of Euſebius of Cæſarea, and his rude eloquence could not be compared with the poliſhed oratory of Gregory or Baſil; but whenever the primate of Egypt was called upon to juſtify his ſentiments, or his conduct, his unpremeditated ſtyle, either of ſpeaking or writing, was clear, forcible, and perſuaſive. He has always been revered in the orthodox ſchool, as one of the moſt accurate maſters of the Chriſtian theology; and he was ſuppoſed to poſſeſs two profane ſciences, leſs adapted to the epiſcopal character, the know-

A. D. 326—373.

CHAP. XXI.

ledge of juriſprudence[97], and that of divination[98]. Some fortunate conjectures of future events, which impartial reaſoners might aſcribe to the experience and judgment of Athanaſius, were attributed by his friends to heavenly inſpiration, and imputed by his enemies to infernal magic.

But as Athanaſius was continually engaged with the prejudices and paſſions of every order of men from the monk to the emperor, the knowledge of human nature was his firſt and moſt important ſcience. He preſerved a diſtinct and unbroken view of a ſcene which was inceſſantly ſhifting; and never failed to improve thoſe deciſive moments which are irrecoverably paſt before they are perceived by a common eye. The archbiſhop of Alexandria was capable of diſtinguiſhing how far he might boldly command, and where he muſt dexterouſly inſinuate; how long he might contend with power, and when he muſt withdraw from perſecution; and while he directed the thunders of the church againſt hereſy and rebellion, he could aſſume, in the boſom of his own party, the flexible and indulgent temper of a prudent leader. The election of Athanaſius has not eſcaped the reproach of irregularity and precipitation[99]; but the propriety-

97 Sulpicius Severus (Hiſt. Sacra, l. ii. p. 396.) calls him a lawyer, a juriſconſult. This character cannot now be diſcovered either in the life or writings of Athanaſius.

98 Dicebatur enim fatidicarum fortium fidem, quæve augurales portenderent alites ſcientiſſime callens aliquoties prædixiſſe futura. Ammianus, xv. 7. A prophecy, or rather a joke, is related by Sozomen (l. iv. c. 10.), which evidently proves (if the crows ſpeak Latin) that Athanaſius underſtood the language of the crows.

99 The irregular ordination of Athanaſius was ſlightly mentioned in the councils which were held againſt him. See Philoſtorg. l. ii. c. 11.

priety of his behaviour conciliated the affections both of the clergy and of the people. The Alexandrians were impatient to riſe in arms for the defence of an eloquent and liberal paſtor. In his diſtreſs he always derived ſupport, or at leaſt conſolation, from the faithful attachment of his parochial clergy; and the hundred biſhops of Egypt adhered, with unſhaken zeal, to the cauſe of Athanaſius. In the modeſt equipage, which pride and policy would affect, he frequently performed the epiſcopal viſitation of his provinces, from the mouth of the Nile to the confines of Æthiopia; familiarly converſing with the meaneſt of the populace, and humbly ſaluting the ſaints and hermits of the deſert[100]. Nor was it only in eccleſiaſtical aſſemblies, among men whoſe education and manners were ſimilar to his own, that Athanaſius diſplayed the aſcendancy of his genius. He appeared with eaſy and reſpectful firmneſs in the courts of princes; and in the various turns of his proſperous and adverſe fortune, he never loſt the confidence of his friends, or the eſteem of his enemies.

CHAP. XXI.

In his youth, the primate of Egypt reſiſted the great Conſtantine, who had repeatedly ſignified

Perſecution againſt Athanaſius, A. D. 330.

c. 11. and Godefroy, p. 71: but it can ſcarcely be ſuppoſed that the aſſembly of the biſhops of Egypt would ſolemnly atteſt a *public* falſehood. Athanaſ. tom. i. p. 726.

[100] See the Hiſtory of the Fathers of the Deſert, publiſhed by Roſweide; and Tillemont, Mem. Eccleſ tom. vii. in the lives of Anthony, Pachomius, &c. Athanaſius himſelf, who did not diſdain to compoſe the life of his friend Anthony, has carefully obſerved how often the holy monk deplored and propheſied the miſchiefs of the Arian hereſy. Athanaſ. tom. ii. p. 492. 498, &c.

CHAP. XXI.

his will, that Arius ſhould be reſtored to the Catholic communion [101]. The emperor reſpected, and might forgive, this inflexible reſolution; and the faction who conſidered Athanaſius as their moſt formidable enemy, were conſtrained to diſſemble their hatred, and ſilently to prepare an indirect and diſtant aſſault. They ſcattered rumours and ſuſpicions, repreſented the archbiſhop as a proud and oppreſſive tyrant, and boldly accuſed him of violating the treaty which had been ratified in the Nicene council, with the ſchiſmatic followers of Meletius [102]. Athanaſius had openly diſapproved that ignominious peace, and the emperor was diſpoſed to believe, that he had abuſed his eccleſiaſtical and civil power, to perſecute thoſe odious ſectaries; that he had ſacrilegiouſly broken a chalice in one of their churches of Maræotis: that he had whipped or impriſoned ſix of their biſhops; and that Arſenius, a ſeventh biſhop of the ſame party, had been murdered, or at leaſt mutilated, by the cruel hand of the pri-

[101] At firſt Conſtantine threatened in *ſpeaking*, but requeſted in *writing*, τα αγραφως μεν πρασσει, γραφων δε, πξιν. His letters gradually aſſumed a menacing tone; but while he required that the entrance of the church ſhould be open to *all*, he avoided the odious name of Arius. Athanaſius, like a ſkilful politician, has accurately marked theſe diſtinctions (tom. i. p. 788.), which allowed him ſome ſcope for excuſe and delay.

[102] The Meletians in Egypt, like the Donatiſts in Africa, were produced by an epiſcopal quarrel which aroſe from the perſecution. I have not leiſure to purſue the obſcure controverſy, which ſeems to have been miſrepreſented by the partiality of Athanaſius, and the ignorance of Epiphanius. See Moſheim's General Hiſtory of the Church, vol. i. p. 201.

mate.

mate[103]. Theſe charges, which affected his honour and his life, were referred by Conſtantine to his brother Dalmatius the cenſor, who reſided at Antioch; the ſynods of Cæſarea and Tyre were ſucceſſively convened; and the biſhops of the Eaſt were inſtructed to judge the cauſe of Athanaſius, before they proceeded to conſecrate the new church of the Reſurrection at Jeruſalem. The primate might be conſcious of his innocence; but he was ſenſible that the ſame implacable ſpirit which had dictated the accuſation, would direct the proceeding, and pronounce the ſentence. He prudently declined the tribunal of his enemies, deſpiſed the ſummons of the ſynod of Cæſarea; and, after a long and artful delay, ſubmitted to the peremptory commands of the emperor, who threatened to puniſh his criminal diſobedience if he refuſed to appear in the council of Tyre[104]. Before Athanaſius, at the head of fifty Egyptian prelates, ſailed from Alexandria, he had wiſely ſecured the alliance of the Meletians; and Arſenius himſelf, his imaginary victim, and his ſecret friend, was privately concealed in his train. The ſynod of Tyre was conducted by Euſebius of Cæſarea, with more paſſion, and with leſs art, than his learning and experience might promiſe; A. D. 335.

[103] The treatment of the ſix biſhops is ſpecified by Sozomen (l. ii. c. 25.); but Athanaſius himſelf, ſo copious on the ſubject of Arſenius and the chalice, leaves this grave accuſation without a reply.

[104] Athanaſ. tom. i. p. 788. Socrates, l. i. c. 28. Sozomen, l. ii. c. 25. The emperor, in his epiſtle of Convocation (Euſeb. in Vit. Conſtant. l iv. c. 42.), ſeems to prejudge ſome members of the clergy, and it was more than probable that the ſynod would apply thoſe reproaches to Athanaſius.

his

CHAP. XXI.

his numerous faction repeated the names of homicide and tyrant; and their clamours were encouraged by the ſeeming patience of Athanaſius; who expected the deciſive moment to produce Arſenius alive and unhurt in the midſt of the aſſembly. The nature of the other charges did not admit of ſuch clear and ſatisfactory replies; yet the archbiſhop was able to prove, that, in the village, where he was accuſed of breaking a conſecrated chalice, neither church nor altar nor chalice could really exiſt. The Arians, who had ſecretly determined the guilt and condemnation of their enemy, attempted, however, to diſguiſe their injuſtice by the imitation of judicial forms: the ſynod appointed an epiſcopal commiſſion of ſix delegates to collect evidence on the ſpot; and this meaſure, which was vigorouſly oppoſed by the Egyptian biſhops, opened new ſcenes of violence and perjury [105]. After the return of the deputies from Alexandria, the majority of the council pronounced the final ſentence of degradation and exile againſt the primate of Egypt. The decree, expreſſed in the fierceſt language of malice and revenge, was communicated to the emperor and the Catholic church; and the biſhops immediately reſumed a mild and devout aſpect, ſuch as became their holy pilgrimage to the Sepulchre of Chriſt [106].

[105] See, in particular, the ſecond Apology of Athanaſius (tom. i. p. 763—808.), and his Epiſtles to the Monks (p. 808—866.). They are juſtified by original and authentic documents; but they would inſpire more confidence, if he appeared leſs innocent, and his enemies leſs abſurd.

[106] Euſebius in Vit. Conſtantin. l. iv. c. 41—47.

But

CHAP. XXI.

His firſt exile, A. D. 336.

But the injuſtice of theſe eccleſiaſtical judges had not been countenanced by the ſubmiſſion, or even by the preſence, of Athanaſius. He reſolved to make a bold and dangerous experiment, whether the throne was inacceſſible to the voice of truth; and before the final ſentence could be pronounced at Tyre, the intrepid primate threw himſelf into a bark which was ready to hoiſt ſail for the Imperial city. The requeſt of a formal audience might have been oppoſed or eluded; but Athanaſius concealed his arrival, watched the moment of Conſtantine's return from an adjacent villa, and boldly encountered his angry ſovereign as he paſſed on horſeback through the principal ſtreet of Conſtantinople. So ſtrange an apparition excited his ſurpriſe and indignation; and the guards were ordered to remove the importunate ſuitor; but his reſentment was ſubdued by involuntary reſpect; and the haughty ſpirit of the emperor was awed by the courage and eloquence of a biſhop, who implored his juſtice, and awakened his conſcience [107]. Conſtantine liſtened to the complaints of Athanaſius with impartial and even gracious attention; the members of the ſynod of Tyre were ſummoned to juſtify their proceedings; and the arts of the Euſebian faction would have been confounded, if they had not aggravated the guilt of the primate by the dexterous ſuppoſition of an unpardonable offence; a criminal deſign to intercept and detain the corn-

[107] Athanaſ. tom. i. p. 804. In a church dedicated to St. Athanaſius, this ſituation would afford a better ſubject for a picture, than moſt of the ſtories of miracles and martyrdoms.

CHAP. XXI.

fleet of Alexandria, which supplied the subsistence of the new capital [108]. The emperor was satisfied that the peace of Egypt would be secured by the absence of a popular leader; but he refused to fill the vacancy of the archiepiscopal throne; and the sentence, which, after a long hesitation, he pronounced, was that of a jealous ostracism, rather than of an ignominious exile. In the remote province of Gaul, but in the hospitable court of Treves, Athanasius passed about twenty-eight months. The death of the emperor changed the face of public affairs; and, amidst the general indulgence of a young reign, the primate was restored to his country by an honourable edict of the younger Constantine, who expressed a deep sense of the innocence and merit of his venerable guest [109].

and restoration, A. D. 338.

His second exile, A. D. 341.

The death of that prince exposed Athanasius to a second persecution; and the feeble Constantius, the sovereign of the East, soon became the secret accomplice of the Eusebians. Ninety bishops of that sect or faction assembled at Antioch, under

[108] Athanas. tom. i. p. 729. Eunapius has related (in Vit. Sophist. p. 36, 37. edit. Commelin) a strange example of the cruelty and credulity of Constantine on a similar occasion. The eloquent Sopater, a Syrian philosopher, enjoyed his friendship, and provoked the resentment of Ablavius, his Prætorian prefect. The corn fleet was detained for want of a south wind; the people of Constantinople were discontented; and Sopater was beheaded, on a charge that he had *bound* the winds by the power of magic. Suidas adds, that Constantine wished to prove, by this execution, that he had absolutely renounced the superstition of the Gentiles.

[109] In his return he saw Constantius twice, at Viminiacum and at Cæsarea in Cappadocia. (Athanas. tom. i. p. 676.) Tillemont supposes that Constantine introduced him to the meeting of the three royal brothers in Pannonia. (Memoires Eccles. tom. viii p. 69.)

the

CHAP. XXI.

the ſpecious pretence of dedicating the cathedral. They compoſed an ambiguous creed, which is faintly tinged with the colours of Semi-Arianiſm, and twenty-five canons, which ſtill regulate the diſcipline of the orthodox Greeks [110]. It was decided, with ſome appearance of equity, that a biſhop, deprived by a ſynod, ſhould not reſume his epiſcopal functions, till he had been abſolved by the judgment of an equal ſynod; the law was immediately applied to the caſe of Athanaſius; the council of Antioch pronounced, or rather confirmed, his degradation: a ſtranger named Gregory, was ſeated on his throne; and Philagrius [111], the præfect of Egypt, was inſtructed to ſupport the new primate with the civil and military powers of the province. Oppreſſed by the conſpiracy of the Aſiatic prelates, Athanaſius withdrew from Alexandria, and paſſed three [112] years as an exile and a ſuppliant on the holy threſhold

[110] See Beveridge Pandect. tom. i. p. 429—452. and tom. ii. Annotation. p. 182. Tillemont, Mem. Eccleſ. tom. vi. p. 310—324. St. Hilary of Poitiers has mentioned this ſynod of Antioch with too much favour and reſpect. He reckons ninety-ſeven biſhops.

[111] This magiſtrate, ſo odious to Athanaſius, is praiſed by Gregory Nazianzen, tom. i. Orat. xxi. p. 390, 391.

Sæpe premente Deo fert Deus alter opem.

For the credit of human nature, I am always pleaſed to diſcover ſome good qualities in thoſe men whom party has repreſented as tyrants and monſters.

[112] The chronological difficulties which perplex the reſidence of Athanaſius at Rome, are ſtrenuouſly agitated by Valeſius (Obſervat. ad Calcem, tom. ii. Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. i. c. 1—5.) and Tillemont (Mem. Eccleſ. tom. viii. p. 674, &c.). I have followed the ſimple hypotheſis of Valeſius, who allows only one journey, after the intruſion of Gregory.

of

CHAP. XXI.

of the Vatican [113]. By the aſſiduous ſtudy of the Latin language, he ſoon qualified himſelf to negotiate with the weſtern clergy; his decent flattery ſwayed and directed the haughty Julius: the Roman pontiff was perſuaded to conſider his appeal as the peculiar intereſt of the Apoſtolic ſee; and his innocence was unanimouſly declared in a council of fifty biſhops of Italy. At the end of three years, the primate was ſummoned to the court of Milan by the emperor Conſtans, who, in the indulgence of unlawful pleaſures, ſtill profeſſed a lively regard for the orthodox faith. The cauſe of truth and juſtice was promoted by the influence of gold [114], and the miniſters of Conſtans adviſed their ſovereign to require the convocation of an eccleſiaſtical aſſembly, which might act as the repreſentatives of the Catholic church. Ninety-four biſhops of the Weſt, ſeventy-ſix biſhops of the Eaſt, encountered each other at Sardica, on the verge of the two empires, but in the domi-

A. D. 346.

[113] I cannot forbear tranſcribing a judicious obſervation of Wetſtein (Prolegomen. N. T. p. 19.): Si tamen Hiſtoriam Eccleſiaſticam velimus conſulere patebit jam inde a ſeculo quarto, cum, ortis controverſiis, eccleſiæ Græciæ doctores in duas partes ſcinderentur, ingenio, eloquentiâ, numero, tantum non æquales, eam partem quæ vincere cupiebat Romam confugiſſe, majeſtatemque pontificis comiter coluiſſe, eoque pacto oppreſſis per pontificem et epiſcopos Latinos adverſariis prævaluiſſe, atque orthodoxiam in conſiliis ſtabiliviſſe. Eam ob cauſam Athanaſius, non ſine comitatu, Romam petiit, pluresque annos ibi hæſit.

[114] Philoſtorgius, l. iii. c. 12. If any corruption was uſed to promote the intereſt of religion, an advocate of Athanaſius might juſtify or excuſe this queſtionable conduct, by the example of Cato and Sidney; the former of whom is *ſaid* to have given, and the latter to have received, a bribe, in the cauſe of liberty.

nions

CHAP. XXI.

nions of the protector of Athanasius. Their debates soon degenerated into hostile altercations; the Asiatics, apprehensive for their personal safety, retired to Philippopolis in Thrace; and the rival synods reciprocally hurled their spiritual thunders against their enemies, whom they piously condemned as the enemies of the true God. Their decrees were published and ratified in their respective provinces; and Athanasius, who in the West was revered as a saint, was exposed as a criminal to the abhorrence of the East [115]. The council of Sardica reveals the first symptoms of discord and schism between the Greek and Latin churches, which were separated by the accidental difference of faith, and the permanent distinction of language.

and restoration, A. D. 349.

During his second exile in the west, Athanasius was frequently admitted to the Imperial presence; at Capua, Lodi, Milan, Verona, Padua, Aquileia, and Treves. The bishop of the diocese usually assisted at these interviews; the master of the offices stood before the veil or curtain of the sacred apartment; and the uniform moderation of the primate might be attested by these respectable witnesses, to whose evidence he solemnly appeals [116]. Prudence would undoubtedly suggest

[115] The Canon, which allows appeals to the Roman pontiffs, has almost raised the council of Sardica to the dignity of a general council; and its acts have been ignorantly or artfully confounded with those of the Nicene synod. See Tillemont, tom. viii. p. 689. and Geddes's Tracts, vol. ii. p. 419—460.

[116] As Athanasius dispersed secret invectives against Constantius (see the Epistle to the Monks), at the same time that he assured him of his profound respect, we might distrust the professions of the archbishop. Tom. i. p. 677.

the

CHAP. XXI.

the mild and reſpectful tone that became a ſubject and a biſhop. In theſe familiar conferences with the ſovereign of the Weſt, Athanaſius might lament the error of Conſtantius; but he boldly arraigned the guilt of his eunuchs and his Arian prelates; deplored the diſtreſs and danger of the Catholic church; and excited Conſtans to emulate the zeal and glory of his father. The emperor declared his reſolution of employing the troops and treaſures of Europe in the orthodox cauſe; and ſignified, by a conciſe and peremptory epiſtle to his brother Conſtantius, that unleſs he conſented to the immediate reſtoration of Athanaſius, he himſelf, with a fleet and army, would ſeat the archbiſhop on the throne of Alexandria [117]. But this religious war, ſo horrible to nature, was prevented by the timely compliance of Conſtantius; and the emperor of the Eaſt condeſcended to ſolicit a reconciliation with a ſubject whom he had injured. Athanaſius waited with decent pride, till he had received three ſucceſſive epiſtles full of the ſtrongeſt aſſurances of the protection, the favour, and the eſteem of his ſovereign; who invited him to reſume his epiſcopal ſeat, and who added the humiliating precaution of engaging his principal miniſters to atteſt the ſincerity of his intentions. They were manifeſted in a ſtill more public manner, by the ſtrict orders which were diſpatched into Egypt to recall the adherents of

[117] Notwithſtanding the diſcreet ſilence of Athanaſius, and the manifeſt forgery of a letter inſerted by Socrates, theſe menaces are proved by the unqueſtionable evidence of Luciſer of Cagliari, and even of Conſtantius himſelf. See Tillemont, tom. viii. p. 693.

Athanaſius,

CHAP. XXI.

Athanaſius, to reſtore their privileges, to proclaim their innocence, and to eraze from the public regiſters the illegal proceedings which had been obtained during the prevalence of the Euſebian faction. After every ſatisfaction and ſecurity had been given, which juſtice or even delicacy could require, the primate proceeded, by ſlow journies, through the provinces of Thrace, Aſia, and Syria; and his progreſs was marked by the abject homage of the Oriental biſhops, who excited his contempt without deceiving his penetration [118]. At Antioch he ſaw the emperor Conſtantius; ſuſtained, with modeſt firmneſs, the embraces and proteſtations of his maſter, and eluded the propoſal of allowing the Arians a ſingle church at Alexandria, by claiming, in the other cities of the empire, a ſimilar toleration for his own party; a reply which might have appeared juſt and moderate in the mouth of an independent prince. The entrance of the archbiſhop into his capital was a triumphal proceſſion; abſence and perſecution had endeared him to the Alexandrians; his authority, which he exerciſed with rigour, was more firmly eſtabliſhed; and his fame was diffuſed from Æthiopia to Britain, over the whole extent of the Chriſtian world [119].

But

[118] I have always entertained ſome doubts concerning the retractation of Urſacius and Valens (Athanaſ. tom. i. p. 776.). Their epiſtles to Julius biſhop of Rome, and to Athanaſius himſelf, are of ſo different a caſt from each other, that they cannot both be genuine. The one ſpeaks the language of criminals who confeſs their guilt and infamy; the other of enemies, who ſolicit on equal terms an honourable reconciliation.

[119] The circumſtances of his ſecond return may be collected from Athanaſius himſelf, tom. i. p. 719 and 822. 843. Socrates, l. ii. c. 18.

CHAP. XXI.

Resentment of Constantius, A. D. 351.

But the subject who has reduced his prince to the necessity of dissembling, can never expect a sincere and lasting forgiveness; and the tragic fate of Constans soon deprived Athanasius of a powerful and generous protector. The civil war between the assassin and the only surviving brother of Constans, which afflicted the empire above three years, secured an interval of repose to the Catholic church; and the two contending parties were desirous to conciliate the friendship of a bishop, who, by the weight of his personal authority, might determine the fluctuating resolutions of an important province. He gave audience to the ambassadors of the tyrant, with whom he was afterwards accused of holding a secret correspondence [120]; and the emperor Constantius repeatedly assured his dearest father, the most reverend Athanasius, that, notwithstanding the malicious rumours which were circulated by their common enemies, he had inherited the sentiments, as well as the throne, of his deceased brother [121]. Gratitude and humanity would have disposed the primate of Egypt to deplore the untimely fate of Constans, and to abhor the guilt of Magnentius; but as he clearly understood that the apprehensions of Constantius were his only safeguard, the

c. 18. Sozomen, l. iii. c. 19. Theodoret, l. ii. c. 11, 12. Philostorgius, l. iii. c. 12.

[120] Athanasius (tom. i. p. 677, 678,) defends his innocence by pathetic complaints, solemn affirmations, and specious arguments. He admits that letters had been forged in his name, but he requests that his own secretaries, and those of the tyrant, may be examined, whether those letters had been written by the former or received by the latter.

[121] Athanas. tom. i. p. 825—844.

fervour

fervour of his prayers for the ſucceſs of the righteous cauſe might perhaps be ſomewhat abated. The ruin of Athanaſius was no longer contrived by the obſcure malice of a few bigoted or angry biſhops, who abuſed the authority of a credulous monarch. The monarch himſelf avowed the reſolution, which he had ſo long ſuppreſſed, of avenging his private injuries [122]; and the firſt winter after his victory, which he paſſed at Arles, was employed againſt an enemy more odious to him than the vanquiſhed tyrant of Gaul. CHAP. XXI.

If the emperor had capriciouſly decreed the death of the moſt eminent and virtuous citizen of the republic, the cruel order would have been executed without heſitation, by the miniſters of open violence or of ſpecious injuſtice. The caution, the delay, the difficulty with which he proceeded in the condemnation and puniſhment of a popular biſhop, diſcovered to the world that the privileges of the church had already revived a ſenſe of order and freedom in the Roman government. The ſentence which was pronounced in the ſynod of Tyre, and ſubſcribed by a large majority of the eaſtern biſhops, had never been expreſsly repealed; and as Athanaſius had been once degraded from his epiſcopal dignity by the judgment of his brethren, every ſubſequent act might be conſidered as irregular, and even criminal. But the memory of the firm and effectual ſupport which the primate of Egypt had derived Councils of Arles and Milan, A. D. 353—359.

[122] Athanaſ. tom. i. p. 861. Theodoret, l. ii. c. 16. The emperor declared, that he was more deſirous to ſubdue Athanaſius, than he had been to vanquiſh Magnentius or Sylvanus.

CHAP. XXI.

from the attachment of the weſtern church, engaged Conſtantius to ſuſpend the execution of the ſentence, till he had obtained the concurrence of the Latin biſhops. Two years were conſumed in eccleſiaſtical negociations; and the important cauſe between the emperor and one of his ſubjects was ſolemnly debated, firſt in the ſynod of Arles, and afterwards in the great council of Milan [123], which conſiſted of above three hundred biſhops. Their integrity was gradually undermined by the arguments of the Arians, the dexterity of the eunuchs, and the preſſing ſolicitations of a prince, who gratified his revenge at the expence of his dignity; and expoſed his own paſſions, whilſt he influenced thoſe of the clergy. Corruption, the moſt infallible ſymptom of conſtitutional liberty, was ſucceſsfully practiſed: honours, gifts, and immunities, were offered and accepted as the price of an epiſcopal vote [124]; and the condemnation of the Alexandrian primate was artfully repreſented, as the only meaſure which could reſtore the peace and union of the Catholic church. The friends of Athanaſius were not, however, wanting to their

[123] The affairs of the council of Milan are ſo imperfectly and erroneouſly related by the Greek writers, that we muſt rejoice in the ſupply of ſome letters of Euſebius, extracted by Baronius, from the archives of the church of Vercellæ, and of an old life of Dionyſius of Milan, publiſhed by Bollandus. See Baronius, A. D. 355. and Tillemont, tom. vii. p. 1415.

[124] The honours, preſents, feaſts, which ſeduced ſo many biſhops, are mentioned with indignation by thoſe who are too pure or too proud to accept them. "We combat (ſays Hilary of Poitiers) "againſt Conſtantius the antichriſt; who ſtrokes the belly inſtead of "ſcourging the back;" qui non dorſa cædit, ſed ventrem palpat. Hilarius contra Conſtant. c. 5. p. 1240.

CHAP. XXI.

leader, or to their cauſe. With a manly ſpirit, which the ſanctity of their character rendered leſs dangerous, they maintained, in public debate, and in private conference with the emperor, the eternal obligation of religion and juſtice. They declared, that neither the hope of his favour, nor the fear of his diſpleaſure, ſhould prevail on them to join in the condemnation of an abſent, an innocent, a reſpectable brother[125]. They affirmed, with apparent reaſon, that the illegal and obſolete decrees of the council of Tyre had long ſince been tacitly aboliſhed by the Imperial edicts, the honourable re-eſtabliſhment of the archbiſhop of Alexandria, and the ſilence or recantation of his moſt clamorous adverſaries. They alleged, that his innocence had been atteſted by the unanimous biſhops of Egypt, and had been acknowledged in the councils of Rome and Sardica[126], by the impartial judgment of the Latin church. They deplored the hard condition of Athanaſius, who, after enjoying ſo many years his ſeat, his reputation, and the ſeeming confidence of his ſovereign, was again called upon to confute the moſt ground-

[125] Something of this oppoſition is mentioned by Ammianus (xv. 7.), who had a very dark and ſuperficial knowledge of eccleſiaſtical hiſtory. Liberius . . . perſeveranter renitebatur, nec viſum hominem, nec auditum damnare nefas ultimum ſæpe exclamans; aperte ſcilicet recalcitrans Imperatoris arbitrio. Id enim ille Athanaſio ſemper infeſtus, &c.

[126] More properly by the orthodox part of the council of Sardica. If the biſhops of both parties had fairly voted, the diviſion would have been 94 to 76. M. de Tillemont (ſee tom. viii. p. 1147—1158.) is juſtly ſurpriſed that ſo ſmall a majority ſhould have proceeded ſo vigorouſly againſt their adverſaries, the principal of whom they immediately depoſed.

CHAP. XXI.

leſs and extravagant accuſations. Their language was ſpecious; their conduct was honourable: but in this long and obſtinate conteſt, which fixed the eyes of the whole empire on a ſingle biſhop, the eccleſiaſtical factions were prepared to ſacrifice truth and juſtice, to the more intereſting object of defending, or removing, the intrepid champion of the Nicene faith. The Arians ſtill thought it prudent to diſguiſe in ambiguous language, their real ſentiments and deſigns: but the orthodox biſhops, armed with the favour of the people, and the decrees of a general council, inſiſted on every occaſion, and particularly at Milan, that their adverſaries ſhould purge themſelves from the ſuſpicion of hereſy, before they preſumed to arraign the conduct of the great Athanaſius [127].

Condemnation of Athanaſius, A. D. 355.

But the voice of reaſon (if reaſon was indeed on the ſide of Athanaſius) was ſilenced by the clamours of a factious or venal majority; and the councils of Arles and Milan were not diſſolved, till the archbiſhop of Alexandria had been ſolemnly condemned and depoſed by the judgment of the Weſtern, as well as of the Eaſtern, church. The biſhops who had oppoſed, were required to ſubſcribe, the ſentence; and to unite in religious communion with the ſuſpected leaders of the adverſe party. A formulary of conſent was tranſmitted by the meſſengers of ſtate to the abſent biſhops: and all thoſe who refuſed to ſubmit their private opinion to the public and inſpired wiſdom of the councils of Arles and Milan, were

[127] Sulp. Severus in Hiſt. Sacra, l. ii. p. 412.

5 immediately

immediately baniſhed by the emperor, who affected to execute the decrees of the Catholic church. Among thoſe prelates who led the honourable band of confeſſors and exiles, Liberius of Rome, Oſius of Cordova, Paulanus of Treves, Dionyſius of Milan, Euſebius of Vercellæ, Lucifer of Cagliari, and Hilary of Poitiers, may deſerve to be particularly diſtinguiſhed. The eminent ſtation of Liberius, who governed the capital of the empire; the perſonal merit and long experience of the venerable Oſius, who was revered as the favourite of the great Conſtantine, and the father of the Nicene faith; placed thoſe prelates at the head of the Latin church: and their example, either of ſubmiſſion or reſiſtance, would probably be imitated by the epiſcopal crowd. But the repeated attempts of the emperor, to ſeduce or to intimidate the biſhops of Rome and Cordova, were for ſome time ineffectual. The Spaniard declared himſelf ready to ſuffer under Conſtantius, as he had ſuffered threeſcore years before under his grandfather Maximian. The Roman, in the preſence of his ſovereign, aſſerted the innocence of Athanaſius, and his own freedom. When he was baniſhed to Beræa in Thrace, he ſent back a large ſum which had been offered for the accommodation of his journey; and inſulted the court of Milan by the haughty remark, that the emperor and his eunuchs might want that gold to pay their ſoldiers and their biſhops [128]. The CHAP. XXI.

[128] The exile of Liberius is mentioned by Ammianus, xv. 7. See Theodoret. l. ii. c. 16. Athanaſ. tom. i. p. 834—837. Hilar. Fragment. i.

CHAP. XXI.

reſolution of Liberius and Oſius was at length ſubdued by the hardſhips of exile and confinement. The Roman pontiff purchaſed his return by ſome criminal compliances; and afterwards expiated his guilt by a ſeaſonable repentance. Perſuaſion and violence were employed to extort the reluctant ſignature of the decrepid biſhop of Cordova, whoſe ſtrength was broken, and whoſe faculties were perhaps impaired, by the weight of an hundred years; and the inſolent triumph of the Arians provoked ſome of the orthodox party to treat with inhuman ſeverity the character or rather the memory, of an unfortunate old man, to whoſe former ſervices Chriſtianity itſelf was ſo deeply indebted [129].

Exiles.

The fall of Liberius and Oſius reflected a brighter luſtre on the firmneſs of thoſe biſhops who ſtill adhered, with unſhaken fidelity, to the cauſe of Athanaſius and religious truth. The ingenious malice of their enemies had deprived them of the benefit of mutual comfort and advice, ſeparated thoſe illuſtrious exiles into diſtant provinces, and carefully ſelected the moſt inhoſpitable ſpots of a great empire [130]. Yet they ſoon

[129] The life of Oſius is collected by Tillemont (tom. vii. p. 524—561.), who in the moſt extravagant terms firſt admires, and then reprobates, the biſhop of Cordova. In the midſt of their lamentations on his fall, the prudence of Athanaſius may be diſtinguiſhed from the blind and intemperate zeal of Hilary.

[130] The confeſſors of the Weſt were ſucceſſively baniſhed to the deſerts of Arabia or Thebais, the lonely places of Mount Taurus, the wildeſt parts of Phrygia, which were in the poſſeſſion of the impious Montaniſts, &c. When the heretic Ætius was too favourably entertained at Mopſueſtia in Cilicia, the place of his exile was changed

ſoon experienced that the deſerts of Libya, and the moſt barbarous tracts of Cappadocia, were leſs inhoſpitable, than the reſidence of thoſe cities in which an Arian biſhop could ſatiate, without reſtraint, the exquiſite rancour of theological hatred [131]. Their conſolation was derived from the conſciouſneſs of rectitude and independence, from the applauſe, the viſits, the letters, and the liberal alms of their adherents [132]; and from the ſatisfaction which they ſoon enjoyed of obſerving the inteſtine diviſions of the adverſaries of the Nicene faith. Such was the nice and capricious taſte of the emperor Conſtantius, and ſo eaſily was he offended by the ſlighteſt deviation from his imaginary ſtandard of Chriſtian truth; that he perſecuted, with equal zeal, thoſe who defended the *conſubſtantiality*, thoſe who aſſerted the *ſimilar ſubſtance*, and thoſe who denied the *likeneſs*, of the Son of God. Three biſhops, degraded and baniſhed for thoſe adverſe opinions, might poſſibly meet in the ſame place of exile; and, according to the difference of their temper, might either pity or inſult the blind enthuſiaſm of their antagoniſts, whoſe preſent ſufferings would never be compenſated by future happineſs.

changed, by the advice of Acacius, to Amblada, a diſtrict inhabited by ſavages, and infeſted by war and peſtilence. Philoſtorg. l. v. c. 2.

[131] See the cruel treatment and ſtrange obſtinacy of Euſebius, in his own letters, publiſhed by Baronius, A.D. 356. N° 92—102.

[132] Cæterum exules ſatis conſtat, totius orbis ſtudiis celebratos pecuniaſque eis in ſumptum affatim congeſtas legationibus quoque eos plebis Catholicæ ex omnibus fere provinciis frequentatos. Sulp. Sever. Hiſt. Sacra, p. 414. Athanaſ. tom. i. p. 836, 840.

The

CHAP. XXI.

Third expulsion of Athanasius from Alexandria, A. D. 356.

The disgrace and exile of the orthodox bishops of the West were designed as so many preparatory steps to the ruin of Athanasius himself[133]. Six and twenty months had elapsed, during which the Imperial court secretly laboured, by the most insidious arts, to remove him from Alexandria, and to withdraw the allowance which supplied his popular liberality. But when the primate of Egypt, deserted and proscribed by the Latin church, was left destitute of any foreign support, Constantius dispatched two of his secretaries with a verbal commission to announce and execute the order of his banishment. As the justice of the sentence was publicly avowed by the whole party, the only motive which could restrain Constantius from giving his messengers the sanction of a written mandate, must be imputed to his doubt of the event; and to a sense of the danger to which he might expose the second city, and the most fertile province of the empire, if the people should persist in the resolution of defending, by force of arms, the innocence of their spiritual father. Such extreme caution afforded Athanasius a specious pretence respectfully to dispute the truth of an order, which he could not reconcile, either with the equity, or with the former declarations,

[133] Ample materials for the history of this third persecution of Athanasius may be found in his own works. See particularly his very able apology to Constantius (tom i. p. 673.), his first Apology for his flight (p. 701.), his prolix epistle to the Solitaries (p. 808), and the original Protest of the People of Alexandria against the violences committed by Syrianus (p. 866.). Sozomen (l. iv. c. 9.) has thrown into the narrative two or three luminous and important circumstances.

of

CHAP. XXI.

of his gracious master. The civil powers of Egypt found themselves inadequate to the task of persuading or compelling the primate to abdicate his episcopal throne; and they were obliged to conclude a treaty with the popular leaders of Alexandria, by which it was stipulated, that all proceedings and hostilities should be suspended till the emperor's pleasure had been more distinctly ascertained. By this seeming moderation, the Catholics were deceived into a false and fatal security; while the legions of the Upper Egypt, and of Libya, advanced, by secret orders and hasty marches, to besiege, or rather to surprise, a capital, habituated to sedition, and inflamed by religious zeal [134]. The position of Alexandria, between the sea and the lake Mareotis, facilitated the approach and landing of the troops; who were introduced into the heart of the city, before any effectual measures could be taken, either to shut the gates, or to occupy the important posts of defence. At the hour of midnight, twenty-three days after the signature of the treaty, Syrianus duke of Egypt, at the head of five thousand soldiers, armed and prepared for an assault, unexpectedly invested the church of St. Theonas, where the archbishop, with a party of his clergy and people, performed their nocturnal devotions. The doors of the sacred edifice yielded to the impetu-

[134] Athanasius had lately sent for Antony, and some of his chosen Monks. They descended from their mountain, announced to the Alexandrians the sanctity of Athanasius, and were honourably conducted by the archbishop as far as the gates of the city. Athanas. tom. ii. p. 491, 492. See likewise Rufinus, iii. 164. in Vit. Patr. p. 524.

osity

CHAP. XXI.

ofity of the attack, which was accompanied with every horrid circumſtance of tumult and bloodſhed; but, as the bodies of the ſlain, and the fragments of military weapons, remained the next day an unexceptionable evidence in the poſſeſſion of the Catholics, the enterpriſe of Syrianus may be conſidered as a ſucceſsful irruption, rather than as an abſolute conqueſt. The other churches of the city were profaned by ſimilar outrages; and, during at leaſt four months, Alexandria was expoſed to the inſults of a licentious army, ſtimulated by the eccleſiaſtics of an hoſtile faction. Many of the faithful were killed; who may deſerve the name of martyrs, if their deaths were neither provoked nor revenged; biſhops and preſbyters were treated with cruel ignominy; conſecrated virgins were ſtripped naked, ſcourged, and violated; the houſes of wealthy citizens were plundered; and, under the maſk of religious zeal, luſt, avarice, and private reſentment, were gratified with impunity, and even with applauſe. The Pagans of Alexandria, who ſtill formed a numerous and diſcontented party, were eaſily perſuaded to deſert a biſhop whom they feared and eſteemed. The hopes of ſome peculiar favours, and the apprehenſion of being involved in the general penalties of rebellion, engaged them to promiſe their ſupport to the deſtined ſucceſſor of Athanaſius, the famous George of Cappadocia. The uſurper, after receiving the conſecration of an Arian ſynod, was placed on the epiſcopal throne by the arms of Sebaſtian, who had been appointed Count of Egypt for the execution

cution of that important design. In the use, as well as in the acquisition, of power, the tyrant George disregarded the laws of religion, of justice, and of humanity; and the same scenes of violence and scandal which had been exhibited in the capital, were repeated in more than ninety episcopal cities of Egypt. Encouraged by success, Constantius ventured to approve the conduct of his ministers. By a public and passionate epistle, the emperor congratulates the deliverance of Alexandria from a popular tyrant, who deluded his blind votaries by the magic of his eloquence; expatiates on the virtues and piety of the most reverend George, the elected bishop; and aspires, as the patron and benefactor of the city, to surpass the fame of Alexander himself. But he solemnly declares his unalterable resolution to pursue with fire and sword the seditious adherents of the wicked Athanasius, who, by flying from justice, has confessed his guilt, and escaped the ignominious death which he had so often deserved [135]. CHAP. XXI.

His behaviour.

Athanasius had indeed escaped from the most imminent dangers; and the adventures of that extraordinary man deserve and fix our attention. On the memorable night when the church of St. Theonas was invested by the troops of Syrianus, the archbishop, seated on his throne, expected, with calm and intrepid dignity, the approach of death. While the public devotion was inter-

[135] Athanas. tom. i. p. 694. The emperor, or his Arian secretaries, while they express their resentment, betray their fears and esteem of Athanasius.

rupted

CHAP. XXI.

rupted by shouts of rage and cries of terror, he animated his trembling congregation to express their religious confidence, by chanting one of the psalms of David, which celebrates the triumph of the God of Israel over the haughty and impious tyrant of Egypt. The doors were at length burst open; a cloud of arrows was discharged among the people; the soldiers, with drawn swords, rushed forwards into the sanctuary; and the dreadful gleam of their armour was reflected by the holy luminaries which burnt round the altar [136]. Athanasius still rejected the pious importunity of the Monks and Presbyters, who were attached to his person; and nobly refused to desert his episcopal station, till he had dismissed in safety the last of the congregation. The darkness and tumult of the night favoured the retreat of the archbishop; and though he was oppressed by the waves of an agitated multitude, though he was thrown to the ground, and left without sense or motion, he still recovered his undaunted courage; and eluded the eager search of the soldiers, who were instructed by their Arian guides, that the head of Athanasius would be the most acceptable present to the emperor. From that moment the primate of Egypt disappeared from the eyes of his enemies, and remained above six years concealed in impenetrable obscurity [137].

The

[136] These minute circumstances are curious, as they are literally transcribed from the protest, which was publicly presented three days afterwards by the Catholics of Alexandria. See Athanas. tom. i. p. 867.

[137] The Jansenists have often compared Athanasius and Arnauld, and have expatiated with pleasure on the faith and zeal, the merit and exile,

CHAP. XXI.

His retreat, A. D. 356—362.

The deſpotic power of his implacable enemy filled the whole extent of the Roman world; and the exaſperated monarch had endeavoured, by a very preſſing epiſtle to the Chriſtian princes of Æthiopia, to exclude Athanaſius from the moſt remote and ſequeſtered regions of the earth. Counts, præfects, tribunes, whole armies, were ſucceſſively employed to purſue a biſhop and a fugitive; the vigilance of the civil and military powers were excited by the Imperial edicts; liberal rewards were promiſed to the man who ſhould produce Athanaſius, either alive or dead; and the moſt ſevere penalties were denounced againſt thoſe who ſhould dare to protect the public enemy [138]. But the deſerts of Thebaïs were now peopled by a race of wild, yet ſubmiſſive fanatics, who preferred the commands of their abbot to the laws of their ſovereign. The numerous diſciples of Antony and Pachomius received the fugitive primate as their father, admired the patience and humility with which he conformed to their ſtricteſt inſtitutions, collected every word which dropt from his lips as the genuine effuſions of inſpired wiſdom; and perſuaded themſelves, that their prayers, their faſts, and their vigils, were leſs meritorious than the zeal which they expreſſed,

exile, of thoſe celebrated doctors. This concealed parallel is very dexterouſly managed by the Abbé de la Bleterie, Vie de Jovien, tom. i. p. 130.

[138] Hinc jam toto orbe profugus Athanaſius, nec ullus ei tutus ad latendum ſuper-erat locus. Tribuni, Præfecti, Comites, exercitus quoque, ad perveſtigandum eum moventur edictis Imperialibus: præmia delatoribus proponuntur, ſi quis eum vivum, ſi id minus, caput certe Athanaſii detuliſſet. Rufin. l. i. c. 16.

and

CHAP. XXI.

and the dangers which they braved, in the defence of truth and innocence [139]. The monaſteries of Egypt were ſeated in lonely and deſolate places, on the ſummit of mountains, or in the iſlands of the Nile; and the ſacred horn or trumpet of Tabenne was the well-known ſignal which aſſembled ſeveral thouſand robuſt and determined Monks, who, for the moſt part, had been the peaſants of the adjacent country. When their dark retreats were invaded by a military force, which it was impoſſible to reſiſt, they ſilently ſtretched out their necks to the executioner; and ſupported their national character, that tortures could never wreſt from an Egyptian the confeſſion of a ſecret which he was reſolved not to diſcloſe [140]. The archbiſhop of Alexandria, for whoſe ſafety they eagerly devoted their lives, was loſt among a uniform and well-diſciplined multitude; and on the nearer approach of danger, he was ſwiftly removed, by their officious hands, from one place of concealment to another, till he reached the formidable deſerts, which the gloomy and credulous temper of ſuperſtition had peopled with dæmons and ſavage monſters. The retirement of Athanaſius, which ended only with the life of Conſtantius, was ſpent, for the moſt part, in the ſociety of the Monks, who faithfully ſerved him as guards, as ſecretaries, and as meſſengers;

[139] Gregor. Nazianzen. tom. i. Orat. xxi. p. 384, 385. See Tillemont, Mem. Eccleſ. tom. vii. p. 176—410. 820—880.

[140] Et nulla tormentorum vis inveniri adhuc potuit; quæ obdurato illius tractûs latroni invito elicere potuit, ut nomen proprium dicat. Ammian. xxii. 16. and Valeſius ad locum.

but

CHAP. XXI.

But the importance of maintaining a more intimate connection with the Catholic party, tempted him, whenever the diligence of the purſuit was abated, to emerge from the deſert, to introduce himſelf into Alexandria, and to truſt his perſon to the diſcretion of his friends and adherents. His various adventures might have furniſhed the ſubject of a very entertaining romance. He was once ſecreted in a dry ciſtern, which he had ſcarcely left before he was betrayed by the treachery of a female ſlave[141]; and he was once concealed in a ſtill more extraordinary aſylum, the houſe of a virgin, only twenty years of age, and who was celebrated in the whole city for her exquiſite beauty. At the hour of midnight, as ſhe related the ſtory many years afterwards, ſhe was ſurpriſed by the appearance of the Archbiſhop in a looſe undreſs, who, advancing with haſty ſteps, conjured her to afford him the protection which he had been directed by a celeſtial viſion to ſeek under her hoſpitable roof. The pious maid accepted and preſerved the ſacred pledge which was entruſted to her prudence and courage. Without imparting the ſecret to any one, ſhe inſtantly conducted Athanaſius into her moſt ſecret chamber, and watched over his ſafety with the tenderneſs of a friend and the aſſiduity of a ſervant. As long as the danger continued, ſhe regularly ſupplied him with books and proviſions, waſhed his feet, ma-

[141] Rufin. l. i. c. 18. Sozomen, l. iv. c. 10. This and the following ſtory will be rendered impoſſible, if we ſuppoſe that Athanaſius always inhabited the aſylum which he accidentally or occaſionally had uſed.

CHAP. XXI.

naged his correſpondence, and dexterouſly concealed from the eye of ſuſpicion, this familiar and ſolitary intercourſe between a ſaint whoſe character required the moſt unblemiſhed chaſtity, and a female whoſe charms might excite the moſt dangerous emotions [142]. During the ſix years of perſecution and exile, Athanaſius repeated his viſits to his fair and faithful companion; and the formal declaration, that he *ſaw* the councils of Rimini and Seleucia [143], forces us to believe that he was ſecretly preſent at the time and place of their convocation. The advantage of perſonally negociating with his friends, and of obſerving and improving the diviſions of his enemies, might juſtify, in a prudent ſtateſman, ſo bold and dangerous an enterpriſe: and Alexandria was connected by trade and navigation with every ſeaport of the Mediterranean. From the depth of his inacceſſible retreat, the intrepid primate waged an inceſſant and offenſive war againſt the protector of the Arians; and his ſeaſonable writings, which were diligently circulated and eagerly peruſed, contributed to unite and animate the orthodox party. In his public apologies, which he addreſſed to the emperor himſelf, he ſometimes

[142] Palladius (Hiſt. Lauſiac. c. 136. in Vit. Patrum, p. 776.), the original author of this anecdote, had converſed with the damſel, who in her old age ſtill remembered with pleaſure ſo pious and honourable a connection. I cannot indulge the delicacy of Baronius, Valeſius, Tillemont, &c. who almoſt reject a ſtory ſo unworthy, as they deem it, of the gravity of eccleſiaſtical hiſtory.

[143] Athanaſ. tom. i. p. 869. I agree with Tillemont (tom. viii. p. 1197.), that his expreſſions imply a perſonal, though perhaps ſecret, viſit to the ſynods.

affected the praiſe of moderation; whilſt at the ſame time, in ſecret and vehement invectives, he expoſed Conſtantius as a weak and wicked prince, the executioner of his family, the tyrant of the republic, and the antichriſt of the church. In the height of his proſperity, the victorious monarch, who had chaſtiſed the raſhneſs of Gallus, and ſuppreſſed the revolt of Sylvanus, who had taken the diadem from the head of Vetranio, and vanquiſhed in the field the legions of Magnentius, received from an inviſible hand a wound, which he could neither heal nor revenge; and the ſon of Conſtantine was the firſt of the Chriſtian princes who experienced the ſtrength of thoſe principles, which, in the cauſe of religion, could reſiſt the moſt violent exertions of the civil power.[144] CHAP. XXI.

Arian biſhops.

The perſecution of Athanaſius, and of ſo many reſpectable biſhops, who ſuffered for the truth of their opinions, or at leaſt for the integrity of their conſcience, was a juſt ſubject of indignation and diſcontent to all Chriſtians, except thoſe who were blindly devoted to the Arian faction. The people regretted the loſs of their faithful paſtors, whoſe baniſhment was uſually followed by the in-

[144] The Epiſtle of Athanaſius to the Monks is filled with reproaches, which the public muſt feel to be true (vol. i. p. 834. 856.); and, in compliment to his readers, he has introduced the compariſons of Pharaoh, Ahab, Belſhazzar, &c. The boldneſs of Hilary was attended with leſs danger, if he publiſhed his invective in Gaul after the revolt of Julian; but Lucifer ſent his libels to Conſtantius, and almoſt challenged the reward of martyrdom. See Tillemont, tom. vii. p. 905.

CHAP. XXI.

truſion of a ſtranger [145] into the epiſcopal chair; and loudly complained, that the right of election was violated, and that they were condemned to obey a mercenary uſurper, whoſe perſon was unknown, and whoſe principles were ſuſpected. The Catholics might prove to the world, that they were not involved in the guilt and hereſy of their eccleſiaſtical governor, by publicly teſtifying their diſſent, or by totally ſeparating themſelves from his communion. The firſt of theſe methods was invented at Antioch, and practiſed with ſuch ſucceſs, that it was ſoon diffuſed over the Chriſtian world. The doxology, or ſacred hymn, which celebrates the *glory* of the Trinity, is ſuſceptible of very nice, but material, inflexions; and the ſubſtance of an orthodox, or an heretical, creed, may be expreſſed by the difference of a disjunctive, or a copulative, particle. Alternate reſponſes, and a more regular pſalmody [146], were introduced into the public ſervice by Flavianus and Diodorus, two devout and active laymen, who were attached to the Nicene faith. Under their conduct, a ſwarm of monks iſſued from the adjacent deſert, bands of well-diſciplined ſingers were ſtationed in the cathedral of Antioch, the Glory to the Father,

Diviſions.

[145] Athanaſius (tom. i. p. 811.) complains in general of this practice, which he afterwards exemplifies (p. 861.) in the pretended election of Fælix. Three eunuchs repreſented the Roman people, and three prelates, who followed the court, aſſumed the functions of the biſhops of the Suburbicarian provinces.

[146] Thomaſſin (Diſcipline de l'Egliſe, tom. i. l. ii. c. 72, 73, p. 966—984.) has collected many curious facts concerning the origin and progreſs of church-ſinging, both in the Eaſt and Weſt.

AND

CHAP. XXI.

AND the Son, AND the Holy Ghoſt [147], was triumphantly chanted by a full chorus of voices; and the Catholics inſulted, by the purity of their doctrine, the Arian prelate, who had uſurped the throne of the venerable Euſtathius. The ſame zeal which inſpired their ſongs, prompted the more ſcrupulous members of the orthodox party to form ſeparate aſſemblies, which were governed by the preſbyters, till the death of their exiled biſhop allowed the election and conſecration of a new epiſcopal paſtor [148]. The revolutions of the court multiplied the number of pretenders; and the ſame city was often diſputed, under the reign of Conſtantius, by two, or three, or even four biſhops, who exerciſed their ſpiritual juriſdiction over their reſpective followers, and alternately loſt and regained the temporal poſſeſſions of the church. The abuſe of Chriſtianity introduced into the Roman government new cauſes of tyranny and ſedition; the bands of civil ſociety were torn aſunder by the fury of religious factions; and the obſcure citizen, who might calmly have ſurveyed the elevation and fall of ſucceſſive em-

[147] Philoſtorgius, l. iii. c. 13. Godefroy has examined this ſubject with ſingular accuracy (p. 147, &c.). There were three heterodox forms: "To the father *by* the Son, *and* in the Holy Ghoſt:" "To the father, *and* the Son *in* the Holy Ghoſt:" and "To the Father *in* the Son *and* the Holy Ghoſt."

[148] After the exile of Euſtathius, under the reign of Conſtantine, the rigid party of the orthodox formed a ſeparation which afterwards degenerated into a ſchiſm, and laſted above fourſcore years. See Tillemont, Mem. Eccleſ. tom. vii. p. 35—54. 1137—1158. tom. viii. p. 537—632. 1314—1332. In many churches, the Arians and Homoouſians, who had renounced each other's *communion*, continued for ſome time to join in prayer. Philoſtorgius, l. iii. c. 14.

CHAP. XXI.

perors, imagined and experienced, that his own life and fortune were connected with the intereſts of a popular eccleſiaſtic. The example of the two capitals, Rome and Conſtantinople, may ſerve to repreſent the ſtate of the empire, and the temper of mankind, under the reign of the ſons of Conſtantine.

Rome.

I. The Roman pontiff, as long as he maintained his ſtation and his principles, was guarded by the warm attachment of a great people; and could reject with ſcorn the prayers, the menaces, and the oblations of an heretical prince. When the eunuchs had ſecretly pronounced the exile of Liberius, the well-grounded apprehenſion of a tumult engaged them to uſe the utmoſt precautions in the execution of the ſentence. The capital was inveſted on every ſide, and the præfect was commanded to ſeize the perſon of the biſhop, either by ſtratagem, or by open force. The order was obeyed; and Liberius, with the greateſt difficulty, at the hour of midnight, was ſwiftly conveyed beyond the reach of the Roman people, before their conſternation was turned into rage. As ſoon as they were informed of his baniſhment into Thrace, a general aſſembly was convened, and the clergy of Rome bound themſelves, by a public and ſolemn oath, never to deſert their biſhop, never to acknowledge the uſurper Fælix; who, by the influence of the eunuchs, had been irregularly choſen and conſecrated within the walls of a profane palace. At the end of two years, their pious obſtinacy ſubſiſted entire and unſhaken; and when Conſtantius

tius visited Rome, he was assailed by the importunate solicitations of a people, who had preserved, as the last remnant of their ancient freedom, the right of treating their sovereign with familiar insolence. The wives of many of the senators and most honourable citizens, after pressing their husbands to intercede in favour of Liberius, were advised to undertake a commission, which, in their hands, would be less dangerous, and might prove more successful. The emperor received with politeness these female deputies, whose wealth and dignity were displayed in the magnificence of their dress and ornaments: he admired their inflexible resolution of following their beloved pastor to the most distant regions of the earth; and consented that the two bishops, Liberius and Fælix, should govern in peace their respective congregations. But the ideas of toleration were so repugnant to the practice, and even to the sentiments, of those times, that when the answer of Constantius was publicly read in the Circus of Rome, so reasonable a project of accommodation was rejected with contempt and ridicule. The eager vehemence which animated the spectators in the decisive moment of a horse-race, was now directed towards a different object; and the Circus resounded with the shout of thousands, who repeatedly exclaimed, "One God, One Christ, "One Bishop." The zeal of the Roman people in the cause of Liberius, was not confined to words alone; and the dangerous and bloody sedition which they excited soon after the departure

CHAP. XXI.

CHAP. XXI.

of Conſtantius, determined that prince to accept the ſubmiſſion of the exiled prelate, and to reſtore him to the undivided dominion of the capital. After ſome ineffectual reſiſtance, his rival was expelled from the city by the permiſſion of the emperor, and the power of the oppoſite faction; the adherents of Fælix were inhumanly murdered in the ſtreets, in the public places, in the baths, and even in the churches; and the face of Rome, upon the return of a Chriſtian biſhop, renewed the horrid image of the maſſacres of Marius, and the proſcriptions of Sylla [149].

Conſtantinople.

II. Notwithſtanding the rapid increaſe of Chriſtians under the reign of the Flavian family, Rome, Alexandria, and the other great cities of the empire, ſtill contained a ſtrong and powerful faction of infidels, who envied the proſperity, and who ridiculed, even on their theatres, the theological diſputes of the church. Conſtantinople alone enjoyed the advantage of being born and educated in the boſom of the faith. The capital of the Eaſt had never been polluted by the worſhip of idols; and the whole body of the people had deeply imbibed the opinions, the virtues, and the paſſions, which diſtinguiſhed the Chriſtians of that age from the reſt of mankind. After the death of Alexander, the epiſcopal throne was diſputed by Paul and Macedonius. By their zeal

[149] See, on this eccleſiaſtical revolution of Rome, Ammianus, xv. 7. Athanaſ. tom. i. p. 834. 861. Sozomen, l. iv. c. 15. Theodoret. l. ii. c. 17. Sulp. Sever. Hiſt. Sacra, l. ii. p. 413. Hieronym. Chron. Marcellin. et Fauſtin. Libell. p. 3, 4. Tillemont. Mem. Eccleſ. tom. vi. p. 336.

and

CHAP. XXI.

and abilities they both deserved the eminent station to which they aspired; and if the moral character of Macedonius was less exceptionable, his competitor had the advantage of a prior election and a more orthodox doctrine. His firm attachment to the Nicene creed, which has given Paul a place in the calendar among saints and martyrs, exposed him to the resentment of the Arians. In the space of fourteen years he was five times driven from the throne; to which he was more frequently restored by the violence of the people, than by the permission of the prince; and the power of Macedonius could be secured only by the death of his rival. The unfortunate Paul was dragged in chains from the sandy deserts of Mesopotamia to the most desolate places of Mount Taurus[150], confined in a dark and narrow dungeon, left six days without food, and at length strangled, by the order of Philip, one of the principal ministers of the emperor Constantius[151]. The first blood which stained the new capital was spilt in this ecclesiastical contest; and many persons were slain on

[150] Cucusus was the last stage of his life and sufferings. The situation of that lonely town, on the confines of Cappadocia, Cilicia, and the Lesser Armenia, has occasioned some geographical perplexity; but we are directed to the true spot by the course of the Roman road from Cæsarea to Anazarbus. See Cellarii Geograph. tom. ii. p. 213. Wesseling ad Itinerar. p. 179. 703.

[151] Athanasius (tom. i. p. 703. 813, 814.) affirms, in the most positive terms, that Paul was murdered; and appeals, not only to common fame, but even to the unsuspicious testimony of Philagrius, one of the Arian persecutors. Yet he acknowledges, that the heretics attributed to disease the death of the bishop of Constantinople. Athanasius is servilely copied by Socrates (l. ii. c. 26.); but Sozomen, who discovers a more liberal temper, presumes (l. iv. c. 2.) to insinuate a prudent doubt.

both

CHAP. XXI.

both ſides, in the furious and obſtinate ſeditions of the people. The commiſſion of enforcing a ſentence of baniſhment againſt Paul, had been entruſted to Hermogenes, the maſter-general of the cavalry; but the execution of it was fatal to himſelf. The Catholics roſe in defence of their biſhop; the palace of Hermogenes was conſumed; the firſt military officer of the empire was dragged by the heels through the ſtreets of Conſtantinople, and, after he expired, his lifeleſs corpſe was expoſed to their wanton inſults[152]. The fate of Hermogenes inſtructed Philip, the Prætorian præfect, to act with more precaution on a ſimilar occaſion. In the moſt gentle and honourable terms, he required the attendance of Paul in the baths of Zeuxippus, which had a private communication with the palace and the ſea. A veſſel, which lay ready at the garden-ſtairs, immediately hoiſted ſail; and, while the people were ſtill ignorant of the meditated ſacrilege, their biſhop was already embarked on his voyage to Theſſalonica. They ſoon beheld, with ſurpriſe and indignation, the gates of the palace thrown open, and the uſurper Macedonius ſeated by the ſide of the præfect on a lofty chariot, which was ſurrounded by troops of guards with drawn ſwords. The military proceſſion advanced towards the cathedral; the Arians and the Catholics eagerly ruſhed to occupy that important poſt; and three thouſand one hundred and fifty perſons loſt their lives in the confuſion of

[152] Ammianus (xiv. 10.) refers to his own account of this tragic event. But we no longer poſſeſs that part of his hiſtory.

the

CHAP. XXI.

the tumult. Macedonius, who was supported by a regular force, obtained a decisive victory; but his reign was disturbed by clamour and sedition; and the causes which appeared the least connected with the subject of dispute, were sufficient to nourish and to kindle the flame of civil discord. As the chapel in which the body of the great Constantine had been deposited was in a ruinous condition, the bishops transported those venerable remains into the church of St. Acacius. This prudent and even pious measure was represented as a wicked profanation by the whole party which adhered to the Homoousian doctrine. The factions immediately flew to arms, the consecrated ground, was used as their field of battle; and one of the ecclesiastical historians has observed, as a real fact, not as a figure of rhetoric, that the well before the church overflowed with a stream of blood, which filled the porticoes and the adjacent courts. The writer who should impute these tumults solely to a religious principle, would betray a very imperfect knowledge of human nature; yet it must be confessed, that the motive which misled the sincerity of zeal, and the pretence which disguised the licentiousness of passion, suppressed the remorse which, in another cause, would have succeeded to the rage of the Christians of Constantinople[88].

[88] See Socrates, l. ii. c. 6, 7. 12, 13. 15, 16. 26, 27. 38. and Sozomen, l. iii. 3, 4. 7. 9. l. iv. c. ii. 21. The acts of St. Paul of Constantinople, of which Photius has made an abstract (Phot. Bibliot. p. 1419—1430.), are an indifferent copy of these historians; but a modern Greek, who could write the life of a saint without adding fables and miracles, is entitled to some commendation.

The

CHAP. XXI.

Cruelty of the Arians.

The cruel and arbitrary disposition of Constantius, which did not always require the provocations of guilt and resistance, was justly exasperated by the tumults of his capital, and the criminal behaviour of a faction, which opposed the authority and religion of their sovereign. The ordinary punishments of death, exile, and confiscation were inflicted with partial rigour; and the Greeks still revere the holy memory of two clerks, a reader and a sub-deacon, who were accused of the murder of Hermogenes, and beheaded at the gates of Constantinople. By an edict of Constantius against the Catholics, which has not been judged worthy of a place in the Theodosian code, those who refused to communicate with the Arian bishops, and particularly with Macedonius, were deprived of the immunities of ecclesiastics, and of the rights of Christians; they were compelled to relinquish the possession of the churches; and were strictly prohibited from holding their assemblies within the walls of the city. The execution of this unjust law, in the provinces of Thrace and Asia Minor, was committed to the zeal of Macedonius; the civil and military powers were directed to obey his commands; and the cruelties exercised by this Semi-Arian tyrant in the support of the *Homoiousion*, exceeded the commission, and disgraced the reign, of Constantius. The sacraments of the church were administered to the reluctant victims, who denied the vocation, and abhorred the principles, of Macedonius. The rites of baptism were conferred on women and children, who, for that purpose, had been torn from the

CHAP. XXI.

the arms of their friends and parents; the mouths of the communicants were held open, by a wooden engine, while the conſecrated bread was forced down their throat; the breaſts of tender virgins were either burnt with red-hot egg-ſhells, or inhumanly compreſſed between ſharp and heavy boards [154]. The Novatians of Conſtantinople, and the adjacent country, by their firm attachment to the Homoouſian ſtandard, deſerved to be confounded with the Catholics themſelves. Macedonius was informed, that a large diſtrict of Paphlagonia [155] was almoſt entirely inhabited by thoſe ſectaries. He reſolved either to convert or to extirpate them; and as he diſtruſted, on this occaſion, the efficacy of an eccleſiaſtical miſſion, he commanded a body of four thouſand legionaries to march againſt the rebels, and to reduce the territory of Mantinium under his ſpiritual dominion. The Novatian peaſants, animated by deſpair and religious fury, boldly encountered the invaders of their country; and though many of the Paphlagonians were ſlain, the Roman legions were vanquiſhed by an irregular multitude,

[154] Socrates, l. ii. c. 27. 38. Sozomen, l. iv. c. 21. The principal aſſiſtants of Macedonius, in the work of perſecution, were the two biſhops of Nicomedia and Cyzicus, who were eſteemed for their virtues, and eſpecially for their charity. I cannot forbear reminding the reader, that the difference between the *Homoouſion* and *Homoiouſion*, is almoſt inviſible to the niceſt theological eye.

[155] We are ignorant of the preciſe ſituation of Mantinium. In ſpeaking of theſe *four* bands of legionaries, Socrates, Sozomen, and the author of the Acts of St. Paul, uſe the indefinite terms of ἀριθμοὶ, φαλάγγες, τάγματα, which Nicephorus very properly tranſlates *thouſands*. Valeſ. ad Socrat. l. ii. c. 38.

armed

CHAP. XXI.

armed only with ſcythes and axes; and, except a few who eſcaped by an ignominious flight, four thouſand ſoldiers were left dead on the field of battle. The ſucceſſor of Conſtantius has expreſſed, in a conciſe but lively manner, ſome of the theological calamities which afflicted the empire, and more eſpecially the Eaſt, in the reign of a prince who was the ſlave of his own paſſions, and of thoſe of his eunuchs. "Many were impriſoned, "and perſecuted, and driven into exile. Whole "troops of thoſe who were ſtiled heretics were "maſſacred, particularly at Cyzicus, and at Samo-"ſata. In Paphlagonia, Bithynia, Galatia, and "in many other provinces, towns and villages "were laid waſte, and utterly deſtroyed [156]."

The revolt and fury of the Donatiſt Circumcellions, A. D. 345, &c.

While the flames of the Arian controverſy conſumed the vitals of the empire, the African provinces were infeſted by their peculiar enemies the ſavage fanatics, who, under the name of *Circumcellions*, formed the ſtrength and ſcandal of the Donatiſt party [157]. The ſevere execution of the laws of Conſtantine had excited a ſpirit of diſcontent and reſiſtance; the ſtrenuous efforts of his ſon Conſtans, to reſtore the unity of the church, exaſperated the ſentiments of mutual hatred, which had firſt occaſioned the ſeparation; and the me-

[156] Julian. Epiſtol. lii. p. 436. edit. Spanheim.

[157] See Optatus Milevitanus (particularly iii. 4.), with the Donatiſt hiſtory, by M. Dupin, and the original pieces at the end of his edition. The numerous circumſtances which Auguſtin has mentioned, of the fury of the Circumcellions againſt others, and againſt themſelves, have been laboriouſly collected by Tillemont, Mem. Eccleſ. tom. vi. p. 147—165; and he has often, though without deſign, expoſed the injuries which had provoked thoſe fanatics.

thods

CHAP. XXI.

thods of force and corruption employed by the two Imperial commiſſioners, Paul and Macarius, furniſhed the ſchiſmatics with a ſpecious contraſt between the maxims of the apoſtles and the conduct of their pretended ſucceſſors[158]. The peaſants who inhabited the villages of Numidia and Mauritania, were a ferocious race, who had been imperfectly reduced under the authority of the Roman laws; who were imperfectly converted to the Chriſtian faith; but who were actuated by a blind and furious enthuſiaſm in the cauſe of their Donatiſt teachers. They indignantly ſupported the exile of their biſhops, the demolition of their churches, and the interruption of their ſecret aſſemblies. The violence of the officers of juſtice, who were uſually ſuſtained by a military guard, was ſometimes repelled with equal violence; and the blood of ſome popular eccleſiaſtics, which had been ſhed in the quarrel, inflamed their rude followers with an eager deſire of revenging the death of theſe holy martyrs. By

[158] It is amuſing enough to obſerve the language of oppoſite parties, when they ſpeak of the ſame men and things. Gratus, biſhop of Carthage, begins the acclamations of an orthodox ſynod, "Gratias Deo omnipotenti et Chriſto Jeſu . . . qui imperavit religioſiſſimo Conſtanti Imperatori, ut votum gereret unitatis, et mitteret miniſtros ſancti operis *famulos Dei* Pauſum et Macarium." Monument. Vet. ad Calcem Optati, p. 313. "Ecce ſubito," (ſays the Donatiſt author of the Paſſion of Marculus) "de Conſtantis regis tyrannicâ domo . . . pollutum Macarianæ perſecutionis murmur increpuit, et *duabus beſtiis* ad Africam miſſis, eodem ſcilicet Macario et Paulo execrandum prorſus ac dirum eccleſiæ certamen indictum eſt; ut populus Chriſtianus ad unionem cum traditoribus faciendam, nudatis militum gladiis et draconum preſentibus ſignis, et tubarum vocibus cogeretur." Monument. p. 304.

their

CHAP. XXI.

their own cruelty and raſhneſs, the miniſters of perſecution ſometimes provoked their fate; and the guilt of an accidental tumult precipitated the criminals into deſpair and rebellion. Driven from their native villages, the Donatiſt peaſants aſſembled in formidable gangs on the edge of the Getulian deſert; and readily exchanged the habits of labour for a life of idleneſs and rapine, which was conſecrated by the name of religion, and faintly condemned by the doctors of the ſect. The leaders of the Circumcellions aſſumed the title of captains of the ſaints; their principal weapon, as they were indifferently provided with ſwords and ſpears, was a huge and weighty club, which they termed an *Iſraelite*; and the well-known ſound of "Praiſe be to God," which they uſed as their cry of war, diffuſed conſternation over the unarmed provinces of Africa. At firſt their depredations were coloured by the plea of neceſſity; but they ſoon exceeded the meaſure of ſubſiſtence, indulged without controul their intemperance and avarice, burnt the villages which they had pillaged, and reigned the licentious tyrants of the open country. The occupations of huſbandry, and the adminiſtration of juſtice, were interrupted; and as the Circumcellions pretended to reſtore the primitive equality of mankind, and to reform the abuſes of civil ſociety, they opened a ſecure aſylum for the ſlaves and debtors, who flocked in crowds to their holy ſtandard. When they were not reſiſted, they uſually contented themſelves with plunder, but the ſlighteſt oppoſition provoked them to acts of violence

violence and murder; and ſome Catholic prieſts, who had imprudently ſignalized their zeal, were tortured by the fanatics with the moſt refined and wanton barbarity. The ſpirit of the Circumcellions was not always exerted againſt their defenceleſs enemies; they engaged, and ſometimes defeated, the troops of the province; and in the bloody action of Bagai, they attacked in the open field, but with unſucceſsful valour, an advanced guard of the Imperial cavalry. The Donatiſts who were taken in arms, received, and they ſoon deſerved, the ſame treatment which might have been ſhewn to the wild beaſts of the deſert. The captives died, without a murmur, either by the ſword, the axe, or the fire; and the meaſures of retaliation were mutliplied in a rapid proportion, which aggravated the horrors of rebellion, and excluded the hope of mutual forgiveneſs. In the beginning of the preſent century, the example of the Circumcellions has been renewed in the perſecution, the boldneſs, the crimes, and the enthuſiaſm of the Camiſards; and if the fanatics of Languedoc ſurpaſſed thoſe of Numidia, by their military atchievements, the Africans maintained their fierce independence with more reſolution and perſeverance [159].

CHAP. XXI.

Such diſorders are the natural effects of religious tyranny; but the rage of the Donatiſts was inflamed by a frenzy of a very extraordinary kind;

Their religious ſuicides.

[159] The Hiſtoire des Camiſards, in 3 vol. 12mo. Villefranche, 1760, may be recommended as accurate and impartial. It requires ſome attention to diſcover the religion of the author.

CHAP. XXI.

and which, if it really prevailed among them in ſo extravagant a degree, cannot ſurely be paralleled in any country, or in any age. Many of theſe fanatics were poſſeſſed with the horror of life, and the deſire of martyrdom; and they deemed it of little moment by what means, or by what hands, they periſhed, if their conduct was ſanctified by the intention of devoting themſelves to the glory of the true faith, and the hope of eternal happineſs[160]. Sometimes they rudely diſturbed the feſtivals, and profaned the temples of paganiſm, with the deſign of exciting the moſt zealous of the idolaters to revenge the inſulted honour of their gods. They ſometimes forced their way into the courts of juſtice, and compelled the affrighted judge to give orders for their immediate execution. They frequently ſtopped travellers on the public highways, and obliged them to inflict the ſtroke of martyrdom, by the promiſe of a reward, if they conſented, and by the threat of inſtant death, if they refuſed to grant ſo very ſingular a favour. When they were diſappointed of every other reſource, they announced the day on which, in the preſence of their friends and brethren, they ſhould caſt themſelves headlong from ſome lofty rock; and many precipices were ſhewn, which had acquired fame by the number of religious ſuicides. In the actions of theſe deſperate enthuſiaſts, who were admired by one party as the martyrs of God, and abhorred by

[160] The Donatiſt ſuicides alleged in their juſtification the example of Razias, which is related in the 14th chapter of the ſecond book of the Maccabees.

the

CHAP. XXI.

the other as the victims of Satan, an impartial philoſopher may diſcover the influence and the laſt abuſe of that inflexible ſpirit, which was originally derived from the character and principles of the Jewiſh nation.

General character of the Chriſtian ſects, A. D. 312—361.

The ſimple narrative of the inteſtine diviſions, which diſtracted the peace, and diſhonoured the triumph, of the church, will confirm the remark of a pagan hiſtorian, and juſtify the complaint of a venerable biſhop. The experience of Ammianus had convinced him, that the enmity of the Chriſtians towards each other, ſurpaſſed the fury of ſavage beaſts againſt man[161]; and Gregory Nazianzen moſt pathetically laments, that the kingdom of heaven was converted, by diſcord, into the image of chaos, of a nocturnal tempeſt, and of hell itſelf[162]. The fierce and partial writers of the times, aſcribing *all* virtue to themſelves, and imputing *all* guilt to their adverſaries, have painted the battle of the angels and dæmons. Our calmer reaſon will reject ſuch pure and perfect monſters of vice or ſanctity, and will impute an equal, or at leaſt an indiſcriminate, meaſure of good and evil to the hoſtile ſectaries, who aſſumed and beſtowed the appellations of orthodox and heretics. They had been educated in the ſame religion, and the ſame civil ſociety. Their hopes and fears in the preſent, or in a future, life, were balanced in the ſame proportion. On either ſide, the error might be in-

[161] Nullas infeſtas hominibus beſtias, ut ſunt ſibi ferales plerique Chriſtianorum expertus. Ammian. xxii. 5.

[162] Gregor. Nazianzen, Orat. i. p. 33. See Tillemont, tom. vi. p. 501. quarto edit.

CHAP. XXI.

nocent, the faith ſincere, the practice meritorious or corrupt. Their paſſions were excited by ſimilar objects; and they might alternately abuſe the favour of the court, or of the people. The metaphyſical opinions of the Athanaſians and the Arians, could not influence their moral character; and they were alike actuated by the intolerant ſpirit, which has been extracted from the pure and ſimple maxims of the goſpel.

Toleration of paganiſm

A modern writer, who, with a juſt confidence, has prefixed to his own hiſtory the honourable epithets of political and philoſophical [163], accuſes the timid prudence of Monteſquieu, for neglecting to enumerate, among the cauſes of the decline of the empire, a law of Conſtantine, by which the exerciſe of the pagan worſhip was abſolutely ſuppreſſed, and a conſiderable part of his ſubjects was left deſtitute of prieſts, of temples, and of any public religion. The zeal of the philoſophic hiſtorian for the rights of mankind, has induced him to acquieſce in the ambiguous teſtimony of thoſe eccleſiaſtics, who have too lightly aſcribed to their favourite hero the *merit* of a general perſecution [164]. Inſtead of alleging this imaginary

[163] Hiſtoire Politique et Philoſophique des Etabliſſemens des Européens dans les deux Indes, tom. i. p. 9.

[164] According to Euſebius (in Vit. Conſtantin. l. ii. c. 45.) the emperor prohibited, both in cities and in the country, τα μυσαρα . . . της Ειδωλολατρειας; the abominable acts or parts of idolatry. Socrates (l. i. c. 17.) and Sozomen (l. ii. c. 4, 5.) have repreſented the conduct of Conſtantine with a juſt regard to truth and hiſtory; which has been neglected by Theodoret (l. v. c. 21.) and Oroſius (vii. 28.). Tum deinde (ſays the latter) primus Conſtantinus *juſto* ordine et *pio* vicem vertit edicto; ſiquidem ſtatuit citra ullam hominum cædem, paganorum templa claudi.

law,

law, which would have blazed in the front of the Imperial codes, we may ſafely appeal to the original epiſtle, which Conſtantine addreſſed to the followers of the ancient religion; at a time when he no longer diſguiſed his converſion, nor dreaded the rivals of his throne. He invites and exhorts, in the moſt preſſing terms, the ſubjects of the Roman empire to imitate the example of their maſter; but he declares, that thoſe who ſtill refuſe to open their eyes to the celeſtial light, may freely enjoy their temples, and their fancied gods. A report, that the ceremonies of paganiſm were ſuppreſſed, is formally contradicted by the emperor himſelf, who wiſely aſſigns, as the principle of his moderation, the invincible force of habit, of prejudice, and of ſuperſtition [165]. Without violating the ſanctity of his promiſe, without alarming the fears of the pagans, the artful monarch advanced, by ſlow and cautious ſteps, to undermine the irregular and decayed fabric of polytheiſm. The partial acts of ſeverity which he occaſionally exerciſed, though they were ſecretly prompted by a Chriſtian zeal, were coloured by the faireſt pretences of juſtice and the public good; and while Conſtantine deſigned to ruin the foundations, he ſeemed to reform the abuſes, of the ancient religion. After the example

CHAP. XXI.

by Conſtantine.

[165] See Euſebius in Vit. Conſtantin. l. ii. c. 56. 60. In the ſermon to the aſſembly of ſaints, which the emperor pronounced when he was mature in years and piety, he declares to the idolaters (c. xi.), that they are permitted to offer ſacrifices, and to exerciſe every part of their religious worſhip.

CHAP. XXI.

of the wiſeſt of his predeceſſors, he condemned, under the moſt rigorous penalties, the occult and impious arts of divination; which excited the vain hopes, and ſometimes the criminal attempts, of thoſe who were diſcontented with their preſent condition. An ignominious ſilence was impoſed on the oracles, which had been publicly convicted of fraud and falſehood; the effeminate prieſts of the Nile were aboliſhed; and Conſtantine diſcharged the duties of a Roman cenſor, when he gave orders for the demolition of ſeveral temples of Phœnicia; in which every mode of proſtitution was devoutly practiſed in the face of day, and to the honour of Venus[166]. The Imperial city of Conſtantinople was, in ſome meaſure, raiſed at the expence, and was adorned with the ſpoils, of the opulent temples of Greece and Aſia; the ſacred property was confiſcated; the ſtatues of gods and heroes were tranſported, with rude familiarity, among a people who conſidered them as objects, not of adoration, but of curioſity: the gold and ſilver were reſtored to circulation; and the magiſtrates, the biſhops, and the eunuchs, improved the fortunate occaſion of gratifying, at once, their zeal, their avarice, and their reſentment. But theſe depredations were confined to a ſmall part of the Roman world; and the provinces had been long ſince accuſtomed to

[166] See Euſebius, in Vit. Conſtantin. l. iii. c. 54—58. and l. iv. c. 23. 25. Theſe acts of authority may be compared with the ſuppreſſion of the Bacchanals, and the demolition of the temple of Iſis, by the magiſtrates of Pagan Rome.

endure

endure the ſame ſacrilegious rapine, from the tyranny of princes and proconſuls, who could not be ſuſpected of any deſign to ſubvert the eſtabliſhed religion [167].

and his ſons.

The ſons of Conſtantine trod in the footſteps of their father, with more zeal, and with leſs diſcretion. The pretences of rapine and oppreſſion were inſenſibly multiplied [168]; every indulgence was ſhewn to the illegal behaviour of the Chriſtians; every doubt was explained to the diſadvantage of paganiſm; and the demolition of the temples was celebrated as one of the auſpicious events of the reign of Conſtans and Conſtantius [169]. The name of Conſtantius is prefixed to a conciſe law, which might have ſuperſeded the neceſſity of any future prohibitions. "It is our "pleaſure, that in all places, and in all cities, "the temples be immediately ſhut, and carefully "guarded, that none may have the power of "offending. It is likewiſe our pleaſure, that all

[167] Euſebius (in Vit. Conſtant. l. iii. c. 54.) and Libanius (Orat. pro Templis, p. 9, 10. edit. Gothofred.), both mention the pious ſacrilege of Conſtantine, which they viewed in very different lights. The latter expreſsly declares, that "he made uſe of the ſacred mo-"ney, but made no alteration in the legal worſhip; the temples "indeed were impoveriſhed, but the ſacred rites were performed "there." Lardner's Jewiſh and Heathen Teſtimonies, vol. iv. p. 140.

[168] Ammianus (xxii. 4.) ſpeaks of ſome court eunuchs who were ſpoliis templorum paſti. Libanius ſays (Orat. pro Templ. p. 23.), that the emperor often gave away a temple, like a dog, or a horſe, or a ſlave, or a gold cup: but the devout philoſopher takes care to obſerve, that theſe ſacrilegious favourites very ſeldom proſpered.

[169] See Gothofred. Cod. Theodoſ. tom. vi. p. 262. Liban. Orat. Parental. c. x. in Fabric. Bibl. Græc. tom. vii. p. 235.

"our

CHAP. XXI.

"our ſubjects ſhould abſtain from ſacrifices. If "any one ſhould be guilty of ſuch an act, let "him feel the ſword of vengeance, and after "his execution, let his property be confiſcated "to the public uſe. We denounce the ſame "penalties againſt the governors of the pro-"vinces, if they neglect to puniſh the crimi-"nals [170]." But there is the ſtrongeſt reaſon to believe, that this formidable edict was either compoſed without being publiſhed, or was publiſhed without being executed. The evidence of facts, and the monuments which are ſtill extant of braſs and marble, continue to prove the public exerciſe of the Pagan worſhip during the whole reign of the ſons of Conſtantine. In the Eaſt, as well as in the Weſt, in cities, as well as in the country, a great number of temples were reſpected, or at leaſt were ſpared; and the devout multitude ſtill enjoyed the luxury of ſacrifices, of feſtivals, and of proceſſions, by the permiſſion, or by the connivance, of the civil government. About four years after the ſuppoſed date of his

[170] Placuit omnibus locis atque urbibus univerſis claudi protinus templa, et acceſſu vetitis omnibus licentiam delinquendi perditis abnegari. Volumus etiam cunctos a ſacrificiis abſtinere. Quod ſiquis aliquid forte hujuſmodi perpetraverit, gladio ſternatur: facultates etiam perempti fiſco decernimus vindicari: et ſimiliter adſtigi rectores provinciarum ſi facinora vindicare neglexerint. Cod. Theodoſ. l. xvi. tit. x. leg. 4. Chronology has diſcovered ſome contradiction in the date of this extravagant law; the only one, perhaps, by which the negligence of magiſtrates is puniſhed by death and confiſcation. M. de la Baſtie (Mem. de l'Academie, tom. xv. p. 98.) conjectures, with a ſhew of reaſon, that this was no more than the minutes of a law, the heads of an intended bill, which were found in Scriniis Memoriæ, among the papers of Conſtantius, and afterwards inſerted, as a worthy model, in the Theodoſian code.

bloody

bloody edict, Conſtantius viſited the temples of Rome; and the decency of his behaviour is recommended by a pagan orator as an example worthy of the imitation of ſucceeding princes. "That emperor," ſays Symmachus, "ſuffered "the privileges of the veſtal virgins to remain "inviolate; he beſtowed the ſacerdotal dignities "on the nobles of Rome, granted the cuſtomary "allowance to defray the expences of the pub-"lic rites and ſacrifices: and, though he had "embraced a different religion, he never at-"tempted to deprive the empire of the ſacred "worſhip of antiquity [171]." The ſenate ſtill preſumed to conſecrate, by ſolemn decrees, the *divine* memory of their ſovereigns; and Conſtantine himſelf was aſſociated, after his death, to thoſe gods whom he had renounced and inſulted during his life. The title, the enſigns, the prerogatives of SOVEREIGN PONTIFF, which had been inſtituted by Numa, and aſſumed by Auguſtus, were accepted, without heſitation, by ſeven Chriſtian emperors; who were inveſted with a more abſolute authority over the religion which they had deſerted, than over that which they profeſſed [172].

[171] Symmach. Epiſtol. x. 54.

[172] The fourth Diſſertation of M. de la Baſtie, ſur le Souverain Pontificat des Empereurs Romains (in the Mem. de l'Acad. tom. xv. p. 75—144.), is a very learned and judicious performance, which explains the ſtate, and proves the toleration, of paganiſm from Conſtantine to Gratian. The aſſertion of Zoſimus, that Gratian was the firſt who refuſed the pontifical robe, is confirmed beyond a doubt; and the murmurs of bigotry, on that ſubject, are almoſt ſilenced.

The

CHAP. XXI

The diviſions of Chriſtianity ſuſpended the ruin of *paganiſm* [173]; and the holy war againſt the infidels was leſs vigorouſly proſecuted by princes and biſhops, who were more immediately alarmed by the guilt and danger of domeſtic rebellion. The extirpation of *idolatry* [174] might have been juſtified

[173] As I have freely anticipated the uſe of *pagans* and paganiſm, I ſhall now trace the ſingular revolutions of thoſe celebrated words. 1. Παγη, in the Doric dialect, ſo familiar to the Italians, ſignifies a fountain; and the rural neighbourhood which frequented the ſame fountain, derived the common appellation of *pagus* and *pagans* (Feſtus ſub voce, and Servius ad Virgil. Georgic. ii. 382.). 2. By an eaſy extenſion of the word, *pagan* and rural became almoſt ſynonymous (Plin. Hiſt. Natur. xxviii. 5.); and the meaner ruſtics acquired that name, which has been corrupted into *peaſants* in the modern languages of Europe. 3. The amazing increaſe of the military order introduced the neceſſity of a correlative term (Hume's Eſſays, vol. i. p. 555.); and all the *people* who were not enliſted in the ſervice of the prince were branded with the contemptuous epithets of pagans (Tacit. Hiſt. iii. 24. 43. 77. Juvenal. Satir. xvi. Tertullian de Pallio, c. 4.). 4. The Chriſtians were the ſoldiers of Chriſt; their adverſaries, who refuſed his *ſacrament*, or military oath of baptiſm, might deſerve the metaphorical name of pagans: and this popular reproach was introduced as early as the reign of Valentinian (A. D. 365.) into Imperial laws (Cod. Theodoſ. l. xvi. tit. ii. leg. 18.) and theological writings. 5. Chriſtianity gradually filled the cities of the empire; the old religion, in the time of Prudentius (adverſ. Symmachum, l. i. ad fin.) and Oroſius (in Præfat. Hiſt.), retired and languiſhed in obſcure villages; and the word *pagans*, with its new ſignification, reverted to its primitive origin. 6. Since the worſhip of Jupiter and his family has expired, the vacant title of pagans has been ſucceſſively applied to all the idolaters and polytheiſts of the old and new world. 7. The Latin Chriſtians beſtowed it, without ſcruple, on their mortal enemies the Mahometans; and the pureſt *unitarians* were branded with the unjuſt reproach of idolatry and paganiſm. See Gerard Voſſius Etymologicon Linguæ Latinæ, in his works, tom. i. p. 420. Godefroy's Commentary on the Theodoſian Code, tom. vi. p. 250. and Ducange, mediæ & infimiæ Latinitat. Gloſſar.

[174] In the pure language of Iona and Athens, Ειδωλον and Λατρεια were ancient and familiar words. The former expreſſed a likeneſs,

an

CHAP. XXI.

juſtified by the eſtabliſhed principles of intolerance: but the hoſtile ſects, which alternately reigned in the Imperial court, were mutually apprehenſive of alienating, and perhaps exaſperating, the minds of a powerful, though declining faction. Every motive of authority and faſhion, of intereſt and reaſon, now militated on the ſide of Chriſtianity; but two or three generations elapſed, before their victorious influence was univerſally felt. The religion which had ſo long and ſo lately been eſtabliſhed in the Roman empire was ſtill revered by a numerous people, leſs attached indeed to ſpeculative opinion, than to ancient cuſtom. The honours of the ſtate and army were indifferently beſtowed on all the ſubjects of Conſtantine and Conſtantius; and a conſiderable portion of knowledge and wealth and valour was ſtill engaged in the ſervice of polytheiſm. The ſuperſtition of the ſenator and of the peaſant, of the poet and the philoſopher, was derived from very different cauſes, but they met with equal devotion in the temples of the gods. Their zeal was inſenſibly provoked by the inſulting triumph of a proſcribed ſect; and their hopes

an apparition (Homer. Odyſſ. xi. 601.) a repreſentation, an *image*, created either by fancy or art. The latter denoted any ſort of *ſervice* or ſlavery. The Jews of Egypt, who tranſlated the Hebrew ſcriptures, reſtrained the uſe of theſe words (Exod. xx. 4, 5.) to the religious worſhip of an image. The peculiar idiom of the Helleniſts, or Grecian Jews, has been adopted by the ſacred and eccleſiaſtical writers; and the reproach of *idolatry* (Ειδωλολατρεια) has ſtigmatized that viſible and abject mode of ſuperſtition, which ſome ſects of Chriſtianity ſhould not haſtily impute to the polytheiſts of Greece and Rome.

were

CHAP. XXI. were revived by the well-grounded confidence, that the presumptive heir of the empire, a young and valiant hero, who had delivered Gaul from the arms of the Barbarians, had secretly embraced the religion of his ancestors.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

Printed by A. Strahan,
Printers Street, London.

AUG 16 1929